

*Robt. Gilmour  
Boston Mass.*

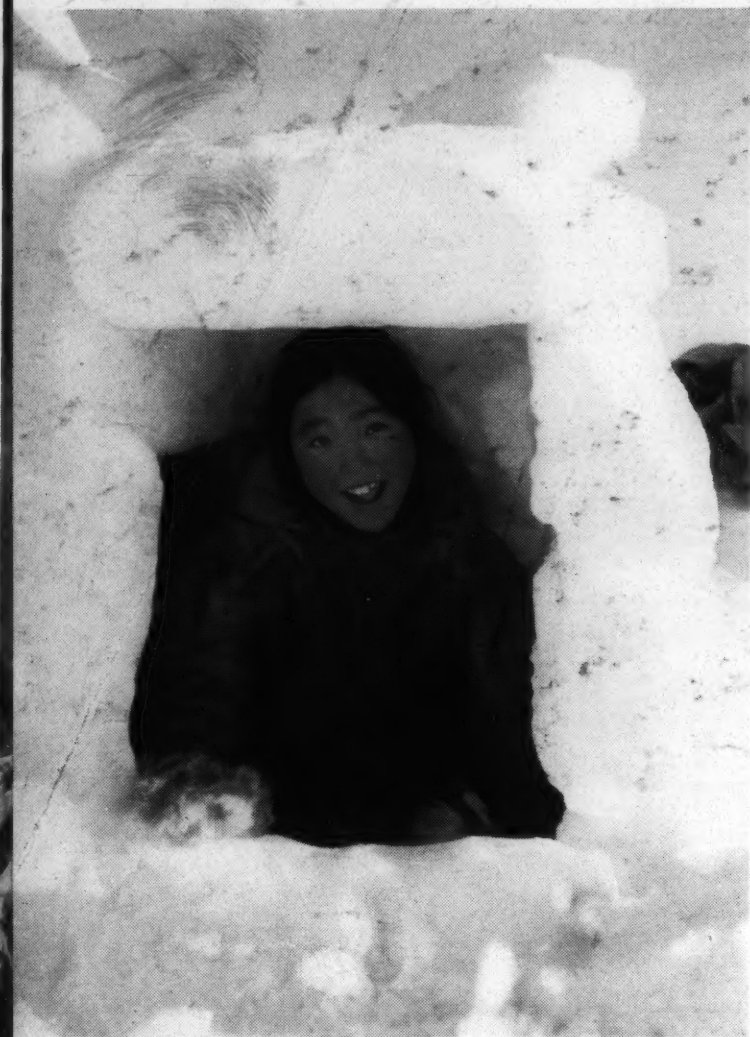


# The

A MAGAZINE OF THE WEST

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY **Dodson's Day Company** GUTTENBERG, N.Y.

INCORPORATED IN NEW YORK



Merry Christmas!

D. B. Marsh

# The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

OUTFIT 277

DECEMBER 1946

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ONE DOLLAR A YEAR

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

**Hudson's Bay Company.**

INCORPORATED 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 1870

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE

WINNIPEG, CANADA

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# The Wanderings of Kane

by Kenneth Kidd



"Half Breeds Travelling." A long line of Red River carts from Fort Garry strikes out across the prairie to hunt buffalo. The originals of all Kane's paintings reproduced in this article are in the Royal Ontario Museum.

ONE hundred years ago, Paul Kane began his great trek across the continent in search of material for sketches of Indian life. It was a high ideal; immediate gain could more easily have been got from the conventional type of work. But Kane realized acutely that the frontier was rapidly being pushed back, and that before long it would be impossible to record the aboriginal mode of life in our country. That he ever heard of the other artists who were working or had worked in the same field—Rindisbacher, Bodmer and the others—there is no evidence to show. Probably he had not. At any rate, the job was his self-appointed life's work. As he says in his preface to the *Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America*, "The subject was one in which I felt a deep interest in my boyhood. I had been accustomed to see hundreds of Indians about my native village, then Little York [Toronto]. . . . But the face of the red man is now no longer seen. All traces of his footsteps are fast being obliterated from his once favourite haunts, and those who would see the aborigines of this country in their original state, or seek to study their native manners and customs, must travel far through the pathless forest to find them. . . ."

"The principal object in my undertaking was to sketch pictures of the principal chiefs, and their original costumes, to illustrate their manners and customs, and to represent the scenery of an almost unknown country."

Kane had been born in Ireland in 1810, the son of an English father and an Irish mother. They brought the boy to Canada when he was eight or nine years old, and settled at York. Young Kane was apprenticed to a furniture manufacturer, at which occupation he laboured to save enough to take him to Europe for training in art. He achieved his ambition in 1841 and spent the next four years studying, principally in Italy.

Before returning to Canada he made excursions to the Levant and the North African Coast, and visited Paris, Switzerland and London. Back in Canada late in 1844 he set out on his first sketching tour the following year.

Leaving Toronto on June 17, 1845, he travelled by way of Lake Simcoe to Georgian Bay. During the course of the summer he obtained material for several paintings of Ojibwas on the Saugeen, Ojibwas and Ottawas on Manitoulin Island, and Sauk, Fox and Winnebagos in Wisconsin. This journey was unsponsored, except for a short passage in the steamer *Experiment*, kindly proffered by Captain Harper.

Fortunately, both for Kane and for posterity, he "made the acquaintance of Mr. Ballantyne [John Ballenden], the gentleman in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's post" at Sault Ste. Marie, to whom he showed the results of his summer's travels. Ballenden was sufficiently impressed to recommend that Kane see the Governor of Rupert's Land, Sir George Simpson, who was then at Lachine. This Kane did the following March. "Sir George entered cordially" into his plans and ordered a passage in the spring brigade of boats which was shortly to leave for the northwest. Kane must have been well pleased, because now he was assured of passage and assistance, far beyond his own resources, and the benevolent patronage of a discerning man. In this wise was the struggling artist launched on his great sketching trip, later to be the basis of his hundred and more oil paintings of Indians, Indian camps, and Canadian scenery.

Sir George himself ordered from Kane a set of paintings; twelve, according to some sources. These apparently were shown at Buckingham Palace, about 1858, and attracted a good deal of favourable attention. It is even said that their reception in London influenced the publisher to bring out Kane's book,

which appeared the following year. Virtually nothing is now known of this set of pictures, and all trace of them is lost. It is possible, and indeed much to be hoped, that some or all of them may in time come to light. Presumably they were done when Kane was at his best as an oil painter, and would undoubtedly be interesting, both in style and in content.

By arrangement with the governor, Paul Kane was to meet the spring brigade of canoes at Sault Ste. Marie, and accompany them to the northwest posts. But he got off to a bad start. He missed the steamboat at Mackinac by about twenty minutes. Nothing daunted, he searched for any craft that would carry him, and succeeded in finding a small skiff and three boys to man it. And so "... with a blanket for a sail, and a single loaf of bread along with a little tea and sugar for stores, we launched out in the lake [Huron] to make a traverse of forty-five miles." In great danger all the way across, they reached the mouth of St. Mary's River, and there were faced with another forty-five miles of navigation which was totally unknown to any of them, at night, with the current against them. Success rewarded their efforts, and in the morning they astonished Sir George by appearing before him. The incident is typical of the entire journey: unexpected hardships, risks and disappointments, always overcome by equal patience, endurance, toil and pertinacity.

The diary which the artist kept, and which, with but slight emendations, formed the substance of his "Wanderings," records with unusual care the route of his travels. It relates that the brigade, after reaching Fort William, set out for the chain of lakes and rivers now forming part of the International Boundary, then down the Winnipeg River to Lake Winnipeg. There Kane spent a few days in the diversion of hunting buffalo with the Metis of Red River Settlement; then proceeded to Norway House. From there he ascended the Saskatchewan as far as he could, and made the rest of his way to Fort Pitt and Fort Edmonton on horseback. His journeyings thereafter took him up the Athabasca and down the Columbia to Fort Vancouver and Fort Victoria, with several side trips in the Oregon country, the lower Columbia and Pelouse rivers, and to Fort Walla-Walla and Fort Colville. On November 5, 1847, exactly a year to the day after he had camped on a certain spot on the Rocky Mountain traverse, he spent a second night there. This time he was well on his return trip home, the route he followed being very nearly the same one by which he had gone west. Having left Toronto on May 9, 1846, he completed his "Wanderings" by October 1, 1848, on which date he was back at Sault Ste. Marie. "Here" says the artist, "I consider that my Indian travels finish, as the rest of my journey home to Toronto was performed on board steam-boats; and the greatest hardship I had to endure, was the difficulty I found in trying to sleep in a civilised bed."



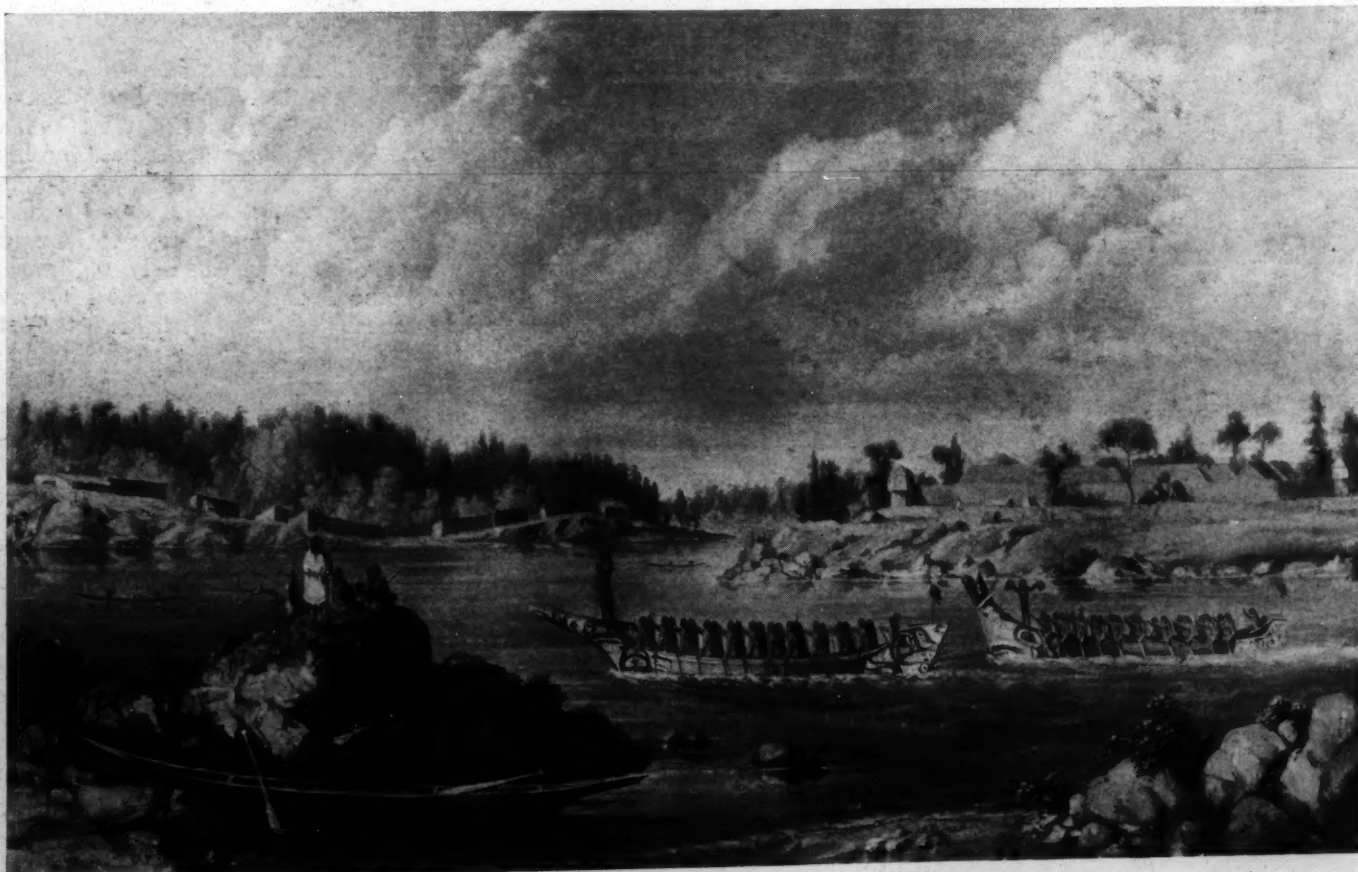
This portrait of Cunne-wabum ("One that looks at the stars"), a Cree half-breed girl of Fort Edmonton, forms the frontispiece of Kane's book. The dress she was wearing (left) is now part of the Kane Collection at the Manitoba Museum.





Kane's picture of Sault Ste. Marie was made on the American side of the rapids. Ojibwa Indians are seen preparing a meal, while Hudson's Bay blankets are airing on the nearby bushes.

The title of this painting, "Return of a War Party," is more picturesque than accurate. The war canoes are shown coming out of James Bay, where the ships from Vancouver now tie up, in front of the Empress Hotel, Victoria. Beyond the canoes is Fort Victoria, then only four years old, and on the left, the wooden houses of the Songhies.





"Winter Travelling in Dog Sleds" shows the honeymoon party of John Rowand, Jr., and Margaret, daughter of Chief Factor Harriott, en route from Fort Edmonton to Fort Pitt, in January 1848. Below: a daguerreotype of Kane, surrounded by some of his trophies.



It is hard to see how Kane could have completed his undertaking without the aid of the Hudson's Bay Company. His own resources were, as we have seen, strictly limited. Not only did Sir George Simpson give him passage in the canoe brigade over the most unrewarding and monotonous part of the trip, but Company clerks at the various posts received him warmly, gave him food and shelter, and often provided him with guides, horses or boats, as well as arranging for his passage in brigades when this was possible. He speaks with much feeling, for instance, of Alexander Christie, "the gentleman in charge" at Fort Garry; of Donald Ross at Norway House, and particularly of James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden, the two chief factors at Fort Vancouver, and John E. Harriott at Fort Edmonton, with whom Kane spent a most enjoyable Christmas in 1847.

Few travellers have faced and overcome so numerous or such stupendous obstacles as did Kane in his continental journey. Aside altogether from the usual hardships involved in following a canoe brigade at that time, such as rising at 1 a.m. and travelling for five or six hours before breakfast, and often canoeing as much as ninety miles in a single day, Kane ran into special difficulties. For instance, at Red River, when returning from a buffalo hunt, his guide took ill with smallpox; there was danger from the Sioux; he had to cross a swampy lake in which his horse got mired; he lost his way and had no compass; his sick guide insisted on camping in the middle of the swamp; it began to rain. But he eventually got out and reached Fort Garry, where the guide died.

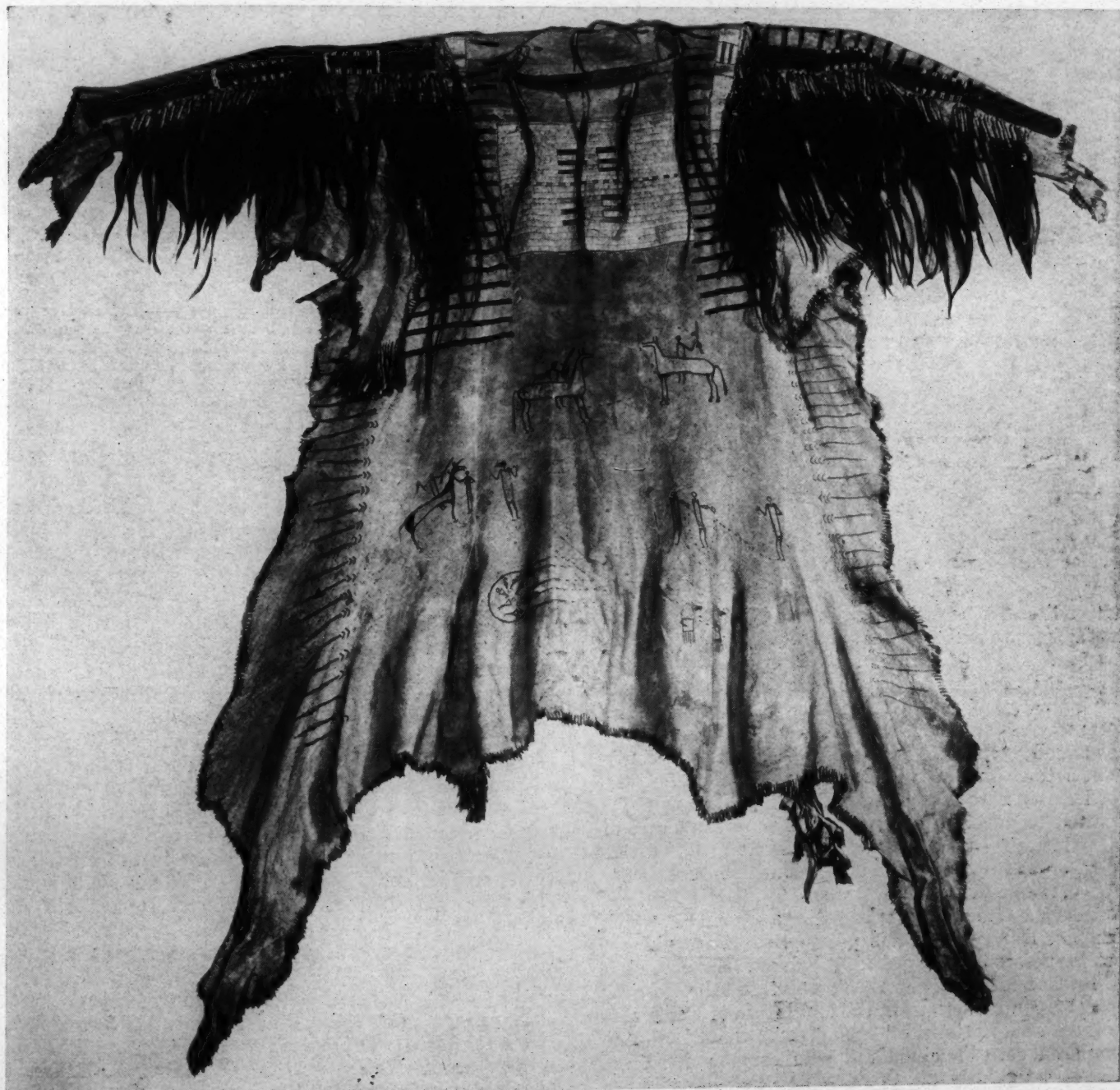
His most trying ordeal without doubt, however, was gone through on the way down the Athabasca on the

return trip. The river was frozen for the most part so that the group progressed on snowshoes. But in various places the ice was treacherous, and once Kane fell through. In other places the absence of ice made it necessary to take to the shore, which in several cases was strewn with fallen trees, so that they had literally to clear a way before them. When on snowshoes, the soft snow piled up and made walking extremely difficult, but even without the snow Kane's feet began to play out. He soon contracted *mal de raquette*, an extremely painful inflammation of the muscles in the leg due to the use of snowshoes. He endured this agony for fifteen days and made 350 miles, "impelled," as he explains, "by dire necessity, for our supply of food was fast diminishing . . ."

In spite of all his difficulties, Kane returned to Toronto with a large diary and a bulky sheaf of

sketches, much to the benefit of posterity. The diary he succeeded in getting published in London by Messrs. Longman in 1859. Although an untrained observer, from the standpoint of the student of Indian life, he nevertheless has left extremely important notes thereon. His observation was keen. Sometimes he characterized an entire people in one sentence; as when the Iroquois in one of the brigades fell into the icy waters of the Athabasca. The man, on being pulled out, was asked if he was cold and answered, "My clothes are cold, but I am not!" He was quick to note too that his ability with a pencil gave him rank as a great "medicine man," in which capacity he enjoyed certain privileges. On the prairies he sketched half-breed encampments with their high-wheeled carts; Sioux, Saulteux, Cree, Blackfoot, Assiniboine and half-breed, and the buffalo hunts that were still the mainstay of

One of the fine Plains Indian shirts in the Kane Collection at the Manitoba Museum. Warlike feats of the owner are recorded in the pictographs. (At lower left, a party of warriors are shown firing guns from a circular entrenchment.) The shoulders are decorated with scalp-locks and large blue beads. The breast panel is of dyed porcupine quills.





native life. Perhaps the glimpses of Northwest Coast Indian life are even more important because they were recorded by still fewer artists than were those of the prairies. Hence, his picture, for instance, of a Clallum woman weaving a blanket is perhaps unique of its sort; the industry has long since ceased.

Loaded with the harvest of this great transcontinental tour and of his earlier Great Lakes trip, he settled down to the task of finishing his work. He wanted to develop the field sketches into a series of oil paintings. But before he got fairly started on this job, he was lured out on another journey. Sir Edward Poore, then a young man, proposed to travel overland to the Coast, and there take passage for the Sandwich Islands. Kane joined this party. But Poore did not get far before he changed his mind, and Kane was left to resume his studio work. About this time he tried to get a commission from the legislature of Canada to paint a series of oils, with the result that he was to prepare a set of twelve for the Government for £500. Kane was greatly disappointed; he had hoped for a

far wider commission which would have enabled him to use many of his five hundred sketches. Happily, George William Allan of Toronto came to his rescue with an order for one hundred oils. These Kane completed. They remained the property of the Allan family until Sir Edmund Osler purchased them and presented them to the Royal Ontario Museum some years ago.

Kane had also given Mr. Allan a number of Indian costumes, decorative objects, implements, and weapons. His benefactor in turn passed them on to his son, George W. Allan—later chairman of the Canadian Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company—who kept them in his summer home on the Lake of the Woods. After his death in 1940, Mr. Allan's family presented them to the Manitoba Museum, where they may now be seen. They form a rare and priceless collection of Indian material at least a century old.

Kane's latter days were spent in darkness, literally and apparently metaphorically. The great work which he had attempted to do for his generation seemed to him to be unappreciated for what it was worth. The government of the day had been niggardly in its reward; and his publisher had not been helpful. He was

The medicine pipe stem belonging to the head chief of all the Crees, pictured by Kane on the opposite page, is now in the Manitoba Museum. Some of the decorations, it will be seen, have been lost. The stem is three feet long. Enclosed in a great many wrappings, the sacred pipe stem was never allowed to touch the ground, but was hung in a special bag on a tripod outside the teepee. No woman was permitted to see it, but it was generally carried by the owner's favourite wife.

discouraged and seemingly somewhat embittered. His eyesight failed him; it was impossible for him to prepare the second volume of his travels which he had hoped to bring out. But to relieve this dark picture, we know that he enjoyed the friendship of such enlightened men as Sir Daniel Wilson and Senator Allan; and that he had the companionship of his wife and children. He had a small house and probably was moderately comfortable. Despite his difficulties, he retained to the last his quiet dignity.

On February 20, 1871, Kane died at his Wellesley Street home, and was buried in St. James's Cemetery. The house has been razed. No landmark exists to reveal the scene of his labours. But the delightful little sketches and his finished oils will live to immortalize him; and they will preserve in the minds of his fellow Canadians the memory of scenes that can never again be witnessed. To Kane, who had the foresight to do this work, and to those public spirited men who helped him, this country will always owe much gratitude.

*The author wishes to acknowledge that many details concerning Kane's life and work are derived from a MS. by Mrs. Cassells (a descendant of Hon. George William Allan) which was donated to the Royal Ontario Museum by Major Raymond Willis.*



Kane's famous portrait of Kee-a-kee-ka-sa-coo-way—"The Man who gives the War-whoop"—head chief of all the Crees, with his medicine pipe stem. According to Kane, the pipe stem carrier was elected every four years, and was not allowed to hold office beyond that period. His official insignia were numerous, and included a highly ornamental skin tent, a bearskin on which the stem was laid when exposed to view, and a medicine rattle, as well as innumerable small articles. The whole paraphernalia required two horses for their transportation. How Kane persuaded the chief to give him so sacred an object as the pipe stem, is not recorded.



The Company post at Coppermine.

L. A. Learmonth.

# CHRISTMAS RESCUE

by William McLean

AS the twilight hours of the morning of December 18, 1945, slowly brightened into the semi-daylight of the Arctic winter, it became apparent to us at Coppermine that the day would be as good for flying as any at that time of the year, and a clear weather report was transmitted to the radio station at Eldorado for the incoming CPA mail trip.

When the small Norseman, CF-CPS, bearing pilot Jack Herriot and mechanic Gordie Brown of CPAL and L. A. Learmonth, Hudson's Bay district inspector, had become airborne at Eldorado at 1.25 p.m. for Coppermine, the settlement was duly informed. Everyone was in high spirits at the thought of receiving mail and express before Christmas, and also welcoming Mr. Learmonth back to his post. The landing strip was checked again to see that all was in readiness. In the meantime the weather remained clear, but a light breeze had sprung up dropping the temperature to 30° below zero.

Department of Transport operator Dave Burr was at the controls of Radio Station VBK, keeping constant watch on the aircraft's working frequency. He heard the pilot talking to Eldorado shortly after take-off, and logged all O.K. No further report was received for about two hours. By that time, 3.15 p.m., the daylight was fast fading away at Coppermine, and a certain feeling of tension was noticeable amongst us all, for the usual trip from Eldorado to Coppermine is of one and a half hours' duration.

At 3.25 p.m. operator Burr heard CPS reporting to Eldorado that they could not find Coppermine, and were circling. They also requested that landing flares and lights be put out. The moon had begun to rise shortly after 3 p.m., and for about twenty-five minutes

visibility was impaired, due to the full brilliance of the moon being obstructed by horizon ground mist. One of us quickly circulated among the residents and had makeshift flares lit. Constables W. Carey and R. Connick of the local R.C.M.P. detachment set a blaze in front of the barracks, while Canon Webster and myself proceeded to light up the runway.

In the meantime, Cst. Carey had set up a flare on the high hill behind the settlement. Leaving Canon Webster and Father Lemer to tend the pots on the landing strip, the writer returned to the radio station for a further check of the aircraft's progress. At 3.45 p.m. CPS was still circling, but could not see the flares, and decided at 4 p.m. to land on a small lake thirty to forty miles south of Coppermine. At that time the horizon ground mist had slowly crept over the sea and land, and for about half an hour visibility was poor. No further radio report was received from CPS, and it was presumed that Herriot had landed. All of us returned to our routine chores, greatly disappointed and somewhat upset, realizing that a plane with a pilot who was new to this particular district had been flying in circles for over half an hour in the darkness.

At 6 p.m. a native, Okhitok, who was temporarily employed by Canon Webster, returned from a forage for wood from the Nipartoktuak River, about fifteen miles east of Coppermine. He was surprised that he could not see the plane tied up to its usual mooring spot in front of the Hudson's Bay post as he had heard the aircraft circling overhead while he was gathering

the last of the wood before coming home. When this report was received at the radio station, it was decided that Herriot had mistaken the Nipartoktuak River in the poor light for Coppermine River, and was south and east of Coppermine.

The next day this information was broadcast to the plane every fifteen minutes from 9 a.m. onwards. The weather was flyable until approximately 12.30, when ground drift and low cloud closed in the ceiling and visibility. When the aircraft had not arrived at Coppermine nor had been heard by radio by one o'clock, it was felt that something serious had happened. CPA officials at Yellowknife were notified of the foregoing on the morning of the 20th, and it was suggested that a search plane should be despatched.

By this time our anxiety had measurably increased, as it was felt that Mr. Learmonth surely knew where he was, and if the plane had landed only thirty to forty miles from Coppermine, being a seasoned Arctic traveller, he would easily have walked that distance into Coppermine.

On the morning of December 22 we received word from CPA at Yellowknife that Captain Ernie Boffa was en route to Coppermine in a new plane, BHV, which he had just brought back into the Territories from Montreal. On the way he was to pick up Dr. Baker of Eldorado, who had volunteered his assistance. Everyone was greatly relieved at this news, as Captain Boffa's reputation was known by all as a careful and skilful pilot, who immediately imbues his passengers with confidence and a feeling of security.

En route to Coppermine from Eldorado, Captain Boffa carefully scrutinized the Coppermine River and its environs, turning off at Bloody Falls to closely watch the lakes and Nipartoktuak River to its mouth. Landing at Coppermine just before darkness, he reported he had found no traces of the missing flight.

After a general conference it was decided that he would search an area twenty-five to thirty miles wide on either side of the Coppermine River south to the Coppermine and September mountains. By 10 p.m. that night it was apparent that the thin stratus cloud formation would disperse, allowing a full moon to light up the terrain sufficiently for takeoff. But shortly afterward, further stratus rolled in from the west and south, and it was decided everyone would turn in. Operator McLean, who had the 4 a.m. weather "sked," would awaken Boffa and the mechanic, Mike Zukho, of BHV.

At 4 a.m. the weather had cleared to perfect visibility and the moon was in full brilliance. Quickly Boffa and Zukho had BHV warmed up, flares were lit on the runway and the hill-top, and BHV was airborne at 4.20 a.m. It was felt that if CPS were anywhere near Coppermine and if the crew and passenger were all right, a fire would be burning and could be spotted easily for a great distance in the darkness. Captain Boffa flew for four hours that morning, but all to no avail. Momentarily at 6.30 a.m. it was thought Zukho had spotted their fire, only to realize within a few minutes that he had seen Coppermine's flare pot on the hill-top thirty miles to the northward.



Captain Ernie Boffa (left) who searched day and night for three days until he found the missing plane. This photo was taken at Coppermine in 1943, when he was piloting a Geodetic Survey party.

L. A. Learmonth.



"Wop" May, superintendent of C.P.A.L. in Edmonton, flew north to join in the search, which was successfully ended on Christmas Day. From a sketch made in 1937 by Kathleen Shackleton.

Returning to Coppermine, as his gas was getting low, Boffa wasted no time in preparing his ship for another search, and shortly after 10 a.m. returned to the air again, covering an even wider area, which entailed flying over unmapped barren land country to the east and south of Coppermine. When he returned to Coppermine with a further negative report, it was felt that all possible additional aircraft should be rushed in to help the search.

After an exchange of signals with Yellowknife, it was decided to ask Alf Caywood, pilot for the Eldorado Mining Co., to assist. Caywood had experienced a similar misfortune in 1941 when he was forced down in the barrens for nine days, when his aircraft caught fire in mid air, and Paddy Gibson, the passenger, was killed. Even though he was spending the Christmas holidays in Edmonton with his wife, he lost no time in offering his help, and left Edmonton the next morning, December 24, arriving in Yellowknife at 3.30 p.m. Taking off immediately with "Wop" May, veteran bush pilot and now superintendent of Canadian Pacific Air Lines in Edmonton, he arrived at Eldorado just before darkness. Pilot Roy McHaffie in BDF also set off for Coppermine the same day via Eldorado with additional search equipment.

In the meantime Captain Boffa had continued to search the area around Coppermine, continually widening his arc. On the afternoon of the 24th, while covering a strip to the east and slightly inland from the coast, Captain Boffa believed that he had heard weak CW signals calling BHV. His gas was running low, so he returned to Coppermine, gassed up, and taking Mr. McLean with him to verify the signals, returned to the approximate location where he had felt that he had

heard the signal. However, nothing further was heard at this time and he dejectedly turned his aircraft back to Coppermine. Captain Boffa was beginning to show the strain of his untiring effort and constant vigilance since December 22. All holiday spirit had long since been erased from our thoughts at Coppermine as we prepared the Christmas trees for the children.

However, after a good night's sleep, Captain Boffa awoke on Christmas Day determined to proceed even further into the unmapped country to the far south and east of Coppermine. Taking along Dr. Baker, who had accompanied each flight, and also the writer, he proceeded eastward along the coast to the Asiatic River, thence inland en route to a large lake which, he had determined from local reports, existed in the depth of the Barrens.

It was approximately 10 a.m. as we took off on Christmas morning. Boffa's buoyant feeling of assured success enveloped us all as he smoothly lifted the aircraft from the ice at Coppermine, winging his way eastward. In the meantime, Alf Caywood with "Wop" May in BTW and Roy McHaffie and Len Debraq had left Eldorado at 8.30 for Coppermine, and were diligently searching the area from the Kendall River northwards and east of Coppermine. Captain Boffa contacted Caywood by radio and quickly outlined his plan in case any mishap should force him down in a little known territory.

Proceeding farther south and east, Boffa circled over each lake and searched every corner as he had done continuously from the height of 400 feet. After he had reached the large lake inland that he had mapped out for the extremity of his search, he turned westward and slightly south—and then suddenly, at 11.15 a.m., we flew right over the missing aircraft!

Someone was running frantically away from the plane toward a small lake where they had marked out a runway. Meanwhile we could see the other two emerge from the plane, where they had industriously been making paper marker flags. When we realized all three were safe after eight long and bitterly cold days



Alf Caywood, C.P.A.L. pilot who had been forced down in the Barrens in 1941, gave up Christmas with his wife in Edmonton to search for the missing party.

L. A. Learmonth.

and nights, our joy was unbounded. The aircraft appeared all intact, but it was soon realized that the slough where they had landed was dotted with rocks, and they had pulled up just a few feet short of a rocky hill. The CPA radio net was quickly informed, and Caywood and McHaffie, who had just gassed up at Coppermine and were airborne, returned to the ground to await the arrival of the rescue plane.

Boffa set his ship down on the small lake about half a mile from CPS and grinned his delight as he relaxed in his seat after four days and nights of constant vigil. He had flown some thirty hours on the search, a good twelve hours by moonlight, so great was his feeling of urgency. Pilot Herriot stood beaming with delight, throwing apish kisses at Boffa in appreciation of their rescue. As soon as the motors had been shut off, Dr. Baker accompanied Herriot back to CPS, for it was learned that Mr. Learmonth had suffered a frozen foot as his price of the ordeal. The rest of us dug out warm fur clothing that we had gathered in Coppermine at the beginning of the search. Taking it along to the plane, we saw with amazement how near the mishap had come to a real tragedy. Later, on examining CPS's skis, we could see where large rolls of brass had been stripped off them by the jagged rocks sticking up through the snow.

A superficial examination of Mr. Learmonth's foot was made by Dr. Baker, and it was decided we all should return to Coppermine immediately, as nothing could be done for the aircraft, which had suffered a broken starter shaft and a dead battery. Not having a tent or even a snowknife or fur clothing, the grounded fliers had to make shift within the aircraft itself, which was poor protection against the cold.

Taking off within half an hour after marking the runway, Captain Boffa circled over CPS for altitude until he had reached sufficient height to get a good sight on the sun and surrounding landmarks. After plotting the approximate position of the plane on the

ground, he wheeled his ship back to Coppermine, where the entire population waited to greet the arrival of the missing group and to congratulate Boffa on his good work.

When Dr. Baker had dressed Mr. Learmonth's foot at the R.C.M.P. detachment, and had left instructions for its treatment, he returned to Eldorado with Caywood, who, having forsaken his family at Christmas time, was anxious to return to Edmonton and complete his holiday. Before leaving, Caywood presented us with two turkeys, already roasted, which Mr. Bolger, the manager of Eldorado Mines, had thoughtfully asked him to take along.

The two ladies of the settlement, Mrs. Webster and Mrs. McLean, wasted no time in preparing a real Christmas dinner. While they were busy in the kitchen getting things in readiness the two children, Marguerite Webster and Donna McLean, were excitedly examining parcels and packages, just like little girls do in homes throughout the country when Santa Claus has stepped off from his sled.

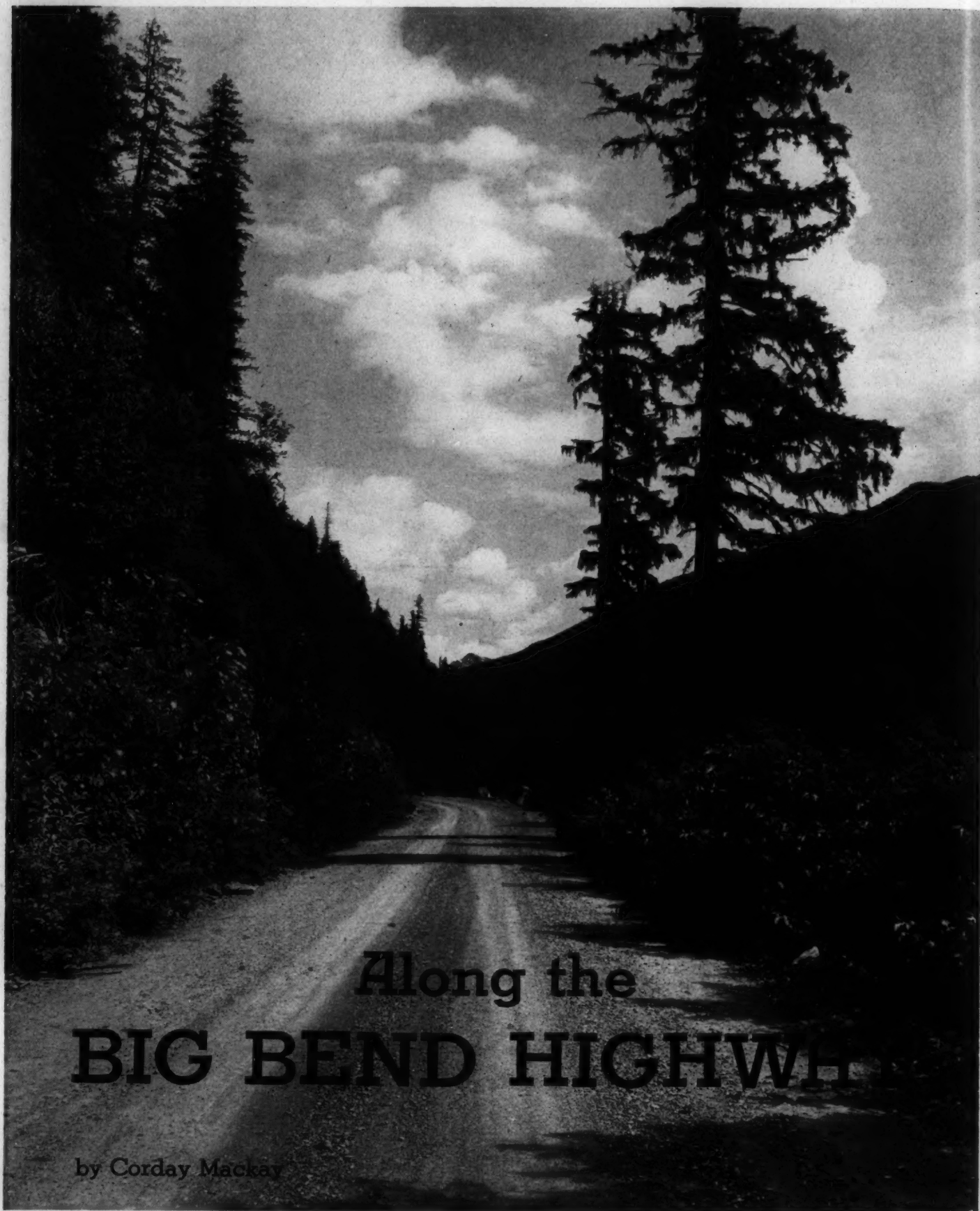
The population of our settlement had increased so much that the usual kitchen was unsuitable to serve so many; and as soon as the ladies announced everything was ready, two long tables were set up in the detachment's living room, where eighteen of us sat down and joined with Canon Webster in his prayer of thanksgiving for such a successful outcome of the search terminated this Christmas Day.

Most of us had long since given up hope of Christmas being celebrated in any joyous form, three days after CPS was unreported, and certainly most of those present had never expected to be spending Christmas at Coppermine.

A toast of thanks was proposed by Mr. Learmonth at the conclusion of the dinner, to Capt. Boffa, for his untiring effort in locating the missing plane, and to the CPAL officials who had left their homes at this time in order to put forward every effort to ensure success.

The missing plane, reconditioned and ready for business again, at the Edmonton airport.





The Highway near Revelstoke, B.C.

B.C. Govt. Travel Bureau.

**T**O motor up the Big Bend Highway to Boat Encampment is a pleasure that many tourists are now able to enjoy once more. Until this year, the war and gas rationing have, since the opening of the highway in 1940, made the trip nearly impossible. Prior to that date the term "Big Bend" was almost a

legend. Visitors to Revelstoke were always told of the wonders beyond the first canyon of the Columbia Valley above the city as though it were a magic land. And small wonder that this was so. For, since the days of the fur traders and voyageurs, over a century ago, except for one brief period of excitement during

the gold rush days of 1865, the Columbia Valley has guarded its secrets well. The turbulence of its river, interspersed as it is with rapids and canyons, below precipitous heavily-timbered mountain slopes, made it largely an unexplored wilderness. That is why it is so easy as one travels through the Big Bend to-day to recreate the past when the Columbia was an important link in a continental, fur trading enterprise.

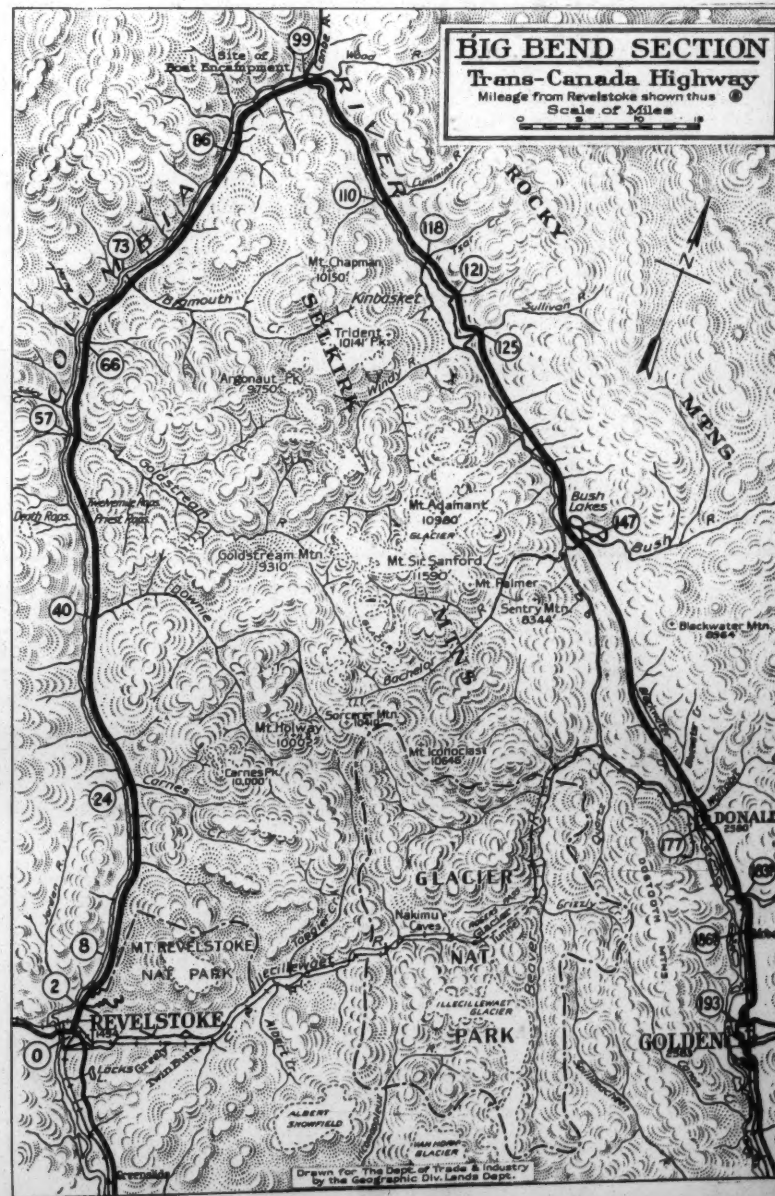
The course of the river from Revelstoke northward to Boat Encampment is filled with romance and history. For while David Thompson, the intrepid explorer, surveyed its full course from source to outlet in 1811, only the lower part of the valley from the Big Bend down became a part of the fur highway. At Boat Encampment the brigades met and passed each other, travelling from east to west or from west to east in the interests of the great company which they served. As letters, journals and reports of those days all attest, the humble voyageurs, the gentlemen officers, the great governor himself, all relaxed at this famous stopping place for a brief spell. Before them, whether their path led east or west, lay hardships and dangers. For those going down stream there were the terrors of the rapids or "Dalles"; before the eastward facing travellers lay the toilsome trail up the Grand Cote, or traverse, to the head of Athabaska Pass.

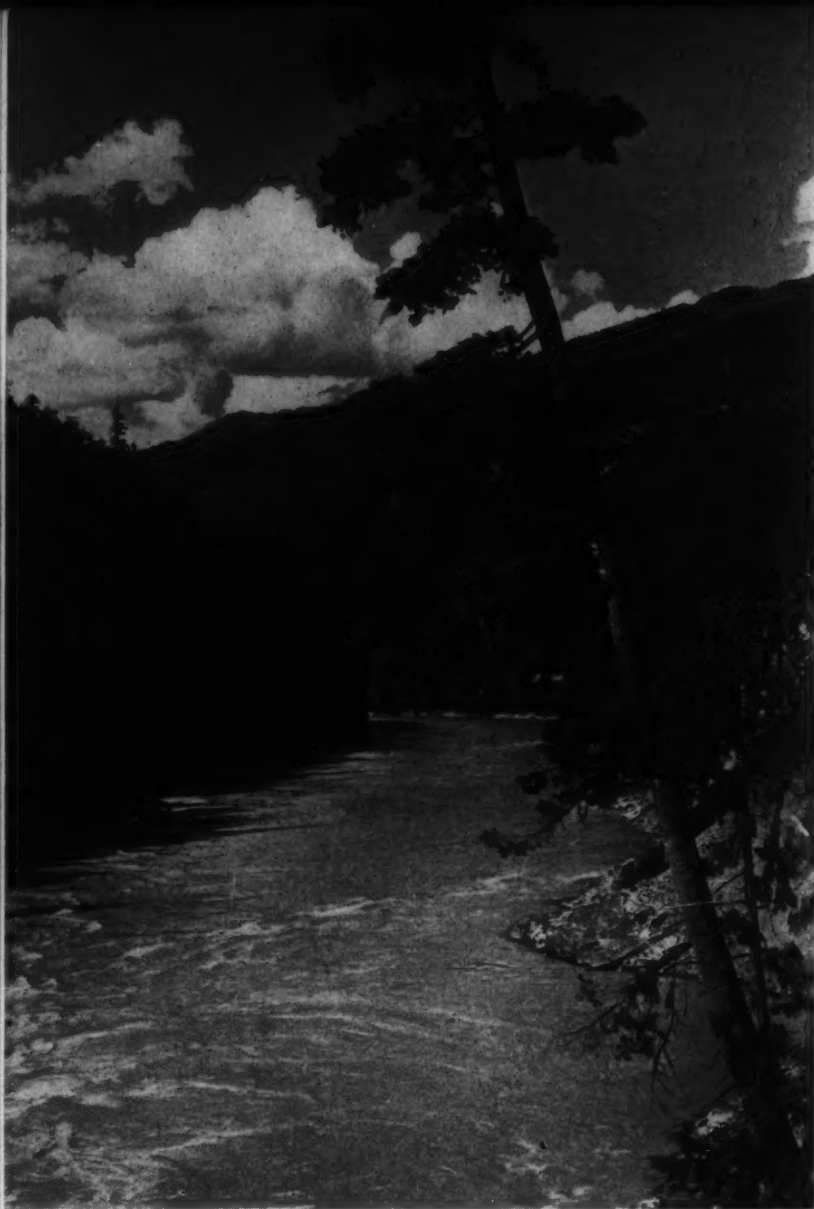
The new motor road from Revelstoke to-day leads along and above the Columbia through scenery un-

changed since Thompson's day. Here, too, is the equally exciting scene of the gold rush days. The road the traveller follows into this historic land, in spite of the ruggedness of the country through which it passes, consists of long, straight stretches and easy grades. The curves are smooth and sweeping, with no sharp or difficult corners. Just above the city the first historic spot on the river is reached. This is the *Petite Dalles* or Revelstoke Canyon, a short, half-mile stretch of rapids. A muffled roar rises to the roadway and warns of the dangers below. Here, in the gold rush days, the gallant little river steamers battled the tumultuous waters, taking hardy fortune seekers to the scene of their labours. At this spot, it is said, the river boats used to take nearly a day to ascend the rapids, but only a few minutes to make the descent. Here, too, occurred one of the greatest tragedies in the Columbia's history, when, in 1838, twelve people were drowned. The story is told in the *Beaver* for September 1942, as well as in Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist*.

The traveller to-day, as he looks down on the fearful rocks and wildly tossing water, finds it easy to reconstruct the scene of that day. Beyond the river the mighty mountain crags hang threateningly over the valley. The great river roars defiance, dashing madly against its imprisoning walls. It seems a marvel that any hearts had ever been stout enough or foolish enough to venture on its surface.

The accuracy of David Thompson's map of the Big Bend country is shown by comparing it with this modern map. Modern place names have been added to his map in block letters.





The beginning of the Little Dalles, above Revelstoke. E. Dickey.

As one leaves this first "Graveyard of the Columbia," with its melancholy associations, and penetrates farther into the valley, the scenery becomes more spectacular, and even threatening. Across the river the great bulk of Frenchman's Cap looms darkly, while in the distance the more remote peaks of the Monashee Range roll back endlessly. More reminders of the gold rush days are soon evident in the series of creeks, spanned in some places by new and excellent bridges. At 24 miles Carne's Creek is reached, and at 40 miles a still more famous one, Downie Creek, for this was one of the centres of the boom of 1865-66.

To this and other spots on the Columbia, miners flocked to search for the gold which in places lay openly in the river bed. They came by way of Cache Creek and Savona; from there they reached the head of Shuswap Lake by steamer. The rest of the journey to their goal was by difficult mountain trails to the banks of the famed Columbia. Other travellers came by way of the lower Columbia, from Portland, following thus in the path of their predecessors, the fur traders of the early 1800's. Boat building soon became an important industry and small river craft were soon plying the waters of the Arrow Lakes and the lower reaches of the river.

The *British Columbian*, the pioneer newspaper of New Westminster, has several entries in issues of that day referring to the gold boom in this almost inacces-

sible region of the young province. On September 10, 1865, it reported, "Steamer navigation terminates at a rapid known as 'The Little Dalles,' the foot of which is about 21 or 22 miles above the head of the Upper Arrow Lake."

On November 4th, of the same year, another news item refers to the Big Bend, as the new Eldorado was already called. "News from the Big Bend," it reads, "continues very encouraging. The Steamer, building on the Columbia River, above Fort Shepherd is nearly completed. A great many boats are constantly passing Fort Shepherd on their way to the new diggings. Fort Shepherd promises to be a prominent point for supplying the Big Bend diggings."

Such excitement, however, was doomed to an early extinction. In 1866 the boom collapsed. The Big Bend had, apparently, either yielded up all its golden store, or else it still guarded its greatest secret jealously. For years a desultory panning and prospecting was kept up by itinerant gold seekers, and, except for their penetration, the great valley remained unexplored. Even today, it is claimed, the arduous trail over the mountains from Shuswap Lake is littered with the remains of the Big Bend Boom.

Five more miles of winding, tree lined roadway above Downie Creek and another of the most historic spots on the Columbia is reached. This is the terrifying *Dalles des Morts*, a name that must have struck terror to the hearts of timid voyageurs in the early days. A description of an incident which made the use of the name Death Rapids very appropriate for this sinister stretch of water is found in Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America*.

In the fall of 1847, Kane was travelling with the east-bound brigade up the Columbia River, on his way home after a lengthy stay on the Pacific Coast. On October 4 the brigade reached a spot just below Death Rapids. His record, describing this part of the journey, reads:

"We camped at night below the 'Dalle des Morts,' or Rapid of the Dead, so called from the following circumstance. About twenty-five or thirty years ago, an Iroquois, a half-breed, and a French Canadian, having charge of a boat, had to descend this frightful rapid. Fearful of running it, they affixed a long line to the bow, and being themselves on the shore, they attempted to lower her gradually by means of it down the foaming torrent. The boat took a sheer and ran outside of a rock, and all their efforts to get her back, or reach the rock themselves through the boiling surge were unavailing. The rope, chafing on the sharp edge of the rock, soon broke, and she dashed down among the whirling eddies, and broke to pieces, with their whole stock of provisions on board.

"They then continued to follow on foot, along the rugged and difficult banks of the river, without food, guns, or ammunition; nor had they been able to save even a blanket to protect them from the inclement weather. At night they encamped in a shivering and famishing condition, not having been able to surmount more than three miles of the obstacles that obstructed their passage at every step along the banks. The next day they proceeded with no better success. They well knew that if they constructed a raft it would not live an hour in this part of the Columbia River, owing to the quick succession of rapids that here beset the navigation. In this starving condition they continued their slow progress till the third day, when the half-breed, fearing his companions would kill him for their food, left them, and was never after heard of, falling, in all probability, a prey to the wolves. The other two lay down, and the Iroquois, watching his opportunity, got up at night and beat his companion's brains out with a stick, and going to work in a methodical manner, after first satisfying his craving hunger with a portion of the body, cut the remainder into thin slices and dried them in the sun, after the manner in which buffalo meat is prepared. Here he remained three days, drying his meat, which he made into a pack, and continued his

journey with it down the river bank, until he came to the commencement of the Upper Lake, where he made a raft, on which he placed his dried meat, and covered it over with pine-bark, seating himself upon it, and paddling down the lake."

Retribution, however, overtook the criminal, the reader is glad to learn. His crime was discovered and he was duly delivered up at Fort Spokane for punishment. Kane's account ends: "The Indian was shortly afterwards sent to a distant post in New Caledonia, both as a punishment, and also in order to get rid of him, as no voyageur will willingly associate with anyone known to have eaten human flesh."

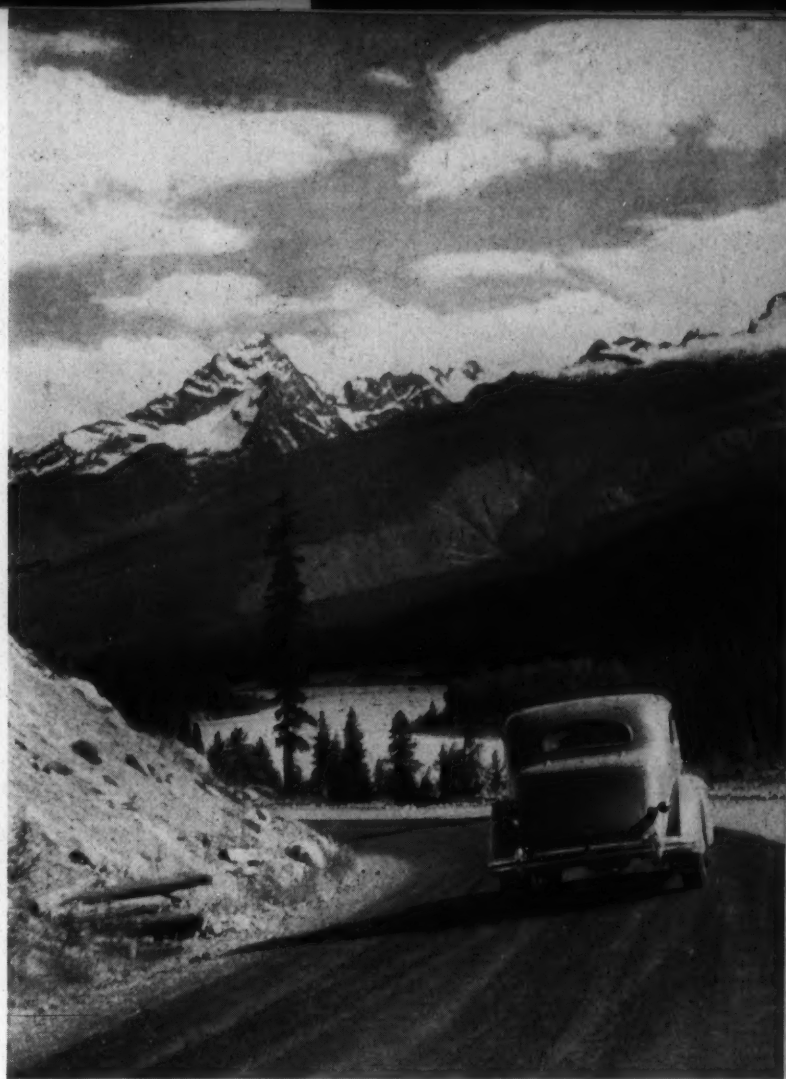
This sinister tale of cannibalism which Kane recounts was not the last of the tragedies to occur at this second graveyard of the mighty river. On June 2, 1866, the *British Columbian* speaks of the finding of the body of a Mr. Richards, one of the sixteen persons recently drowned at Death Rapids.

With the exception of Goldstream, at 57 miles, the scene of Death Rapids is the last truly historic point on the lower Big Bend Highway. It is, too, almost a half-way mark, for the total distance from Revelstoke to Boat Encampment is ninety-nine miles. For the last half of the journey the traveller has the feeling that he is entering a narrowing valley, for the three ranges—the Monashees, the Rockies and the Selkirks—here seem to meet in a bewildering array of peaks. Nor is the scene, when Boat Encampment itself is reached, in any sense unworthy of the Columbia's romantic history. Here the grey-green waters of the river make their big bend, swirling around the sharp curve in a magnificent orchestration of sound.

Below: The Columbia below Priest Rapids, backed by the peaks of the Monashees.



Above: The river from the highway, about forty miles above Revelstoke.  
Photos by E. Dickey.



At this point, too, as though to complete the feeling of a mighty meeting place of mountains and waters, two other rivers of considerable size join the parent stream. They are the Wood and the Canoe Rivers. Nor is the background lacking in a display of power and majesty. From the fir-clad banks, lifting mile on mile above the valley bottom, rise some of the spectacular crags which line the trail that at one time led over the Big Hill, or Grand Cote, as the voyageurs called it. The new bridge over the Columbia at the peak of the "Bend" and the modern lodge nearby do little to spoil the atmosphere of the past which everywhere lingers so strongly. Down through these frowning heights the portagers of the Columbia Brigades made their way to Boat Encampment. For here, the highest spot on the river to which navigation from the Pacific coast could reach, the boats were left to be picked up again by weary travellers coming over the mountains from the east.

The actual site of Boat Encampment is a few minutes walk from the Lodge on the opposite side of the river. A pleasant trail through the forest, within sight and sound of the rushing waters of the river, leads to the old camp ground on the banks of Wood River, just where it enters the Columbia. It is thought that the exact site has been washed away in the spring freshets which year by year nibble deeply into the overhanging banks. But there is still enough of the

open, grassy peninsula with the big meadow behind it left for the traveller to feel he is standing where David Thompson stood when he made the first camp at this spot.

The story of that camp and the first expedition down the Columbia has often been told. Thompson's *Journal* tells of the months spent at Boat Encampment, as he named it, in the late winter and early spring of 1811. He had arrived at the Big Bend on January 26, too late to begin the descent of the river. Moreover, he had no boats, and had therefore to find suitable materials with which to build them. During the last lap of his journey, he had also had many discouragements; the Indians were hostile and threatening; several of his men, terrified by the dreadful snowfields and glittering peaks among which they had been forced to camp while making the great traverse, deserted and turned back. Finally, the remnants of his party reached the junction of the Wood and Canoe Rivers with the Columbia. His *Journal* describes the scene.

"The upper stream [the Wood] which forms the defile by which we came to the Columbia, I named the Flat Heart from the Men being dispirited; it had nothing particular. The other was the Canoe River; which ran through a bold rude valley, of a steady descent which gave to this river a very rapid descent without any falls . . . its breadth thirty yards, the water clear over a bed of pebbles and small stones, Moose, Deer, and Beaver were plentiful and the mildness of

Surprise Rapids in the Big Bend of the Columbia.

W. F. Montgomery.





These men are looking east across the mouths of the Canoe and Wood Rivers towards the Rockies.

E. Dickey

the climate, and the large supply of water induced many of them to build slight houses. . . . These two streams at the foot of the hills have formed a wide alluvial, on which are forest Trees of enormous size; the white Cedars were from fifteen to thirty-six feet in girth . . . the pines were from eighteen to forty-two feet in girth; measured at ten feet above the ground, which the snow enabled us to do. They were finely formed, and rose full two hundred feet without a branch, and threw off very luxuriant heads; the white Birch was also a stately Tree, tall and erect, but none above fifteen feet girth and these were few . . . these Forests did not extend beyond these alluvials; on the east side of the Mountains the Trees were small, a stunted growth with branches to the ground; there we were Men, but on the west side we were pigmies; in such forests what could we do with Axes of two pounds weight?"

The explorer's description of the building of the first human habitation at this point is masterly in its simplicity:

"On the 27th January," the Journal continues, "we set to work to clear away the Snow to the depth of three feet almost as firm as Ice, and with Boards split from the Cedar Trees made a Hut of about twelve feet square in which to be tolerably comfortable . . . and make it a shelter from the weather which we effected by the twelfth of February; and were thus protected from the many showers of wet snow and rain, and enabled to dry our clothes."

The explorers then settled down to work, and two men were sent off with letters to the distant fort east of the mountains; but on the first day of March they returned as the snow was too deep. Thompson's thoughts were, apparently, centred on the descent of the Columbia and a means of transport. His *Journal* goes on with the story:

"Having now examined the White Birch in every quarter for Birch Rind wherewith to make a Canoe for our voyage to the Pacific Ocean, without finding any even thick enough to make a dish; such is the influence of a mild climate on

the Rind of the Birch Tree. We had to turn our thoughts to some other material, and Cedar wood being the lightest and most pliable for a Canoe, we split out thin boards of Cedar wood, of about six inches in breadth and builded a Canoe of twenty-five feet in length by fifty inches in breadth, of the same form of a common Canoe, using Cedar boards, instead of Birch Rind, which proved to be equally light and much stronger than Birch Rind, the greatest difficulty we had was sewing the boards to each round the timbers. As we had no nails we had to make use of the fine roots of the Pine which we split," . . .

By April 16, the work was finished, and the journey began, not down the river as we might have expected—and for this decision Thompson has been severely censured by many historians—but back to the head waters of the Columbia; thence, by portages and streams, to continue his journey by the lower waters of the river to the Pacific, too late to claim the Oregon territory for Britain. He reached Fort Astoria on July 15, 1811, to find the Pacific Fur Company ahead of him. From here he soon began his return trip, this time following the Columbia all the way, through the Arrow Lakes, past the present site of Revelstoke, through the series of Dalles, and so on to his old camp at the Big Bend. Thus he completed his work of surveying the great Columbia. His survey still appears on all maps of that territory.

Other illustrious visitors were to pass along the same route during the years that followed. Chief among these was the great Sir George Simpson himself, who, in 1824, made an inspection trip to the Columbia Department. His party left York Factory on August 15 of that year and arrived at Fort Assiniboine on October 2. The scenery on the way up the Athabaska River to the pass seemed to him magnificent, and in his journal he comments on the wild and romantic beauty of the setting of Jasper's House. By canoe they



Royal Ontario Museum

An interesting comparison can be made between these three pictures. Above is Paul Kane's painting of Boat Encampment, sketched a hundred years ago. Below is much the same scene, taken looking up the valley of the Canoe River (foreground). Kane, it will be seen, exaggerated the height of the peaks. The river mouth in his picture would be that of the Canoe, which suggests that his standpoint must have been near the island seen in the aerial view opposite, just below the widest part of the river. Some signs point to the site of Boat Encampment as being on the far bank of the Columbia, near the right bank of the Canoe. But more recent opinion holds that it was located near the left bank of the Wood, on a site now covered by the Columbia.

E. Dickey



made their way to "William Henry's Old House," the Governor records, and beyond. Then came the traverse. "The Mountains now encrease to a stupendous Size; the Summits of many obscured from our sight by Clouds and of others covered by eternal Snows." At the Great Divide Simpson noted a little lake, or twin lakelets side by side, from which two streams flowed away. He named the spot the "Committee's Punch Bowl," in honour of the far-away Governor and Committee of the Company in London. Descending through the Athabaska Pass, he reached Boat Encampment by way of the Wood River and embarked on the last lap of his journey. On November 8 he reached Fort George (the renamed Fort Astoria). Altogether it had taken eighty-four days for his trip, twenty days less than the previous record, for Simpson always prided himself on the speed of his travel.

Still another famous traveller who passed this way was a young Scots botanist, David Douglas, after whom the huge firs of the Pacific slope were named, and are still called, Douglas firs. He, too, kept a notebook or journal, and in it he has left some descriptions of the huge glaciers on the traverse that give the reader to-day a vivid picture of the immensities through which the early travellers made their way.

"At noon," he writes, "on April 27th, we had the satisfaction of landing at Boat Encampment at the base of the Rocky Mountains. How familiar these snowy mountains have been to us, so that we might be expected to lose an adequate idea of their immense altitude, yet on beholding the Grand Dividing Ridge of this mighty continent, all that we have seen before seems to fade from the mind, and be forgotten in the contemplation of their height and indescribably rugged and sharp peaks, with the darkness of the rocks, their glaciers and eternal snows."

On May 1, walking on snow shoes, they reached the summit and began to descend the eastern side of

what Douglas and others referred to as the "Big Hill." His *Journal* continues:

"Being well rested by one o'clock I set out with the view of ascending what seemed to be the highest peak on the North. Its height appeared to be no less than 16,000 or 17,000 feet above the sea level. After passing over the lower ridge, I came to about 1,200 feet of by far the most difficult and fatiguing walking I ever experienced, the utmost care was required to tread safely over the crust of snow . . . the view from the summit is of too awful a cast to afford pleasure. Nothing can be seen in every direction, far as the eye can reach, except mountains, towering above one another, rugged beyond all description, while the dazzling reflection from the snow, the heavenly azure of the solid glaciers, with the rainbow tints of their shattered fragments and the enormous icicles suspended from the perpendicular rocks, and the majestic and terrible avalanches hurling themselves from the more exposed southerly rocks, produced a crash and groaned through the distant valleys with a sound only equalled by that of an earthquake. Such scenes give a sense of the stupendous and wonderful works of the Almighty!"

Shortly after Douglas wrote this, through the development of direct water communication with England and the removal of the Hudson's Bay Company's Pacific headquarters to Victoria, the Columbia route gradually fell into disuse. Soon the trails through Leather and Athabaska Passes were known only to Indians. They did not come into prominence again until the years 1857 to 1860, when the Palliser Expedition was in the area, exploring and mapping for possible railway routes. The gold excitement, it is true, brought a little flurry of excitement to the Columbia, but much of it did not reach Boat Encampment, for steamer navigation ended far below that point. In 1872 Walter Moberly was sent into the mountains to carry out exploration work for the Canadian Pacific. Thus the railway era was ushered in and Boat Encampment was forgotten until 1940, when the motor road brought it once more into the paths of the world.

Aerial view of the Big Bend of the Columbia, looking up the valley of the Canoe River. The Wood is the river coming in from right centre. Compare with the photo opposite, and note the difference in the appearance of the peaks. R.C.A.F.



# THE SIEGE OF FORT PITT

by Elizabeth M. McLean

**M**Y father, W. J. McLean, was sent to take charge of Fort Pitt in October, 1884. He had been stationed at Isle à la Crosse, and my mother and we children had to go from the Red River Settlement to Fort Carlton to wait for him. From there we travelled together to Fort Pitt with horses and a covered wagon. We found it a strenuous trip, for cold weather and heavy snow came early that fall. The horses broke through the ice in the creeks, and the wagons stuck in the mud. We reached Fort Pitt on October 29. The winter that followed was long and cold with a great deal of snow.

But what a place to call a fort! It was situated on the flats on the north bank of the Saskatchewan River with hills rising beyond. There was no wall or stockade around it, and only about six houses, built to form a square. Besides the few employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, there were stationed at the fort twenty North West Mounted Police, with Captain Francis Dickens—son of Charles Dickens—in command.

It was a lonely and quiet place, so we had to make our own amusements. Fortunately for us, my father had arranged to have an organ brought along for my mother's benefit. She was very fond of music, as we all were. We would often spend an evening singing and playing together. Sometimes when we had gone through most of the songs we knew I would get my sister Amelia to sing some of the old songs translated into Cree or Saulteaux—such songs as "The Lost Chord," and "I Stood on the Bridge at Midnight." We whiled away many a long winter evening playing the banjo and fiddle and organ, or amusing ourselves with cribbage or checkers.

We had two or three visits from Chief Big Bear during the winter. My father always sent him over to our kitchen to have something to eat. Barley soup was his favourite food. I remember his saying, "Eat all you can while you have a chance. You never know when you may be starving." Little did we know then that we would be considering the possibility of starvation before another year had passed.

As the winter wore on, my father realized that there was some unrest among the Indians. They seemed to be very much dissatisfied with the treatment given them by Indian Agent Quinn at Frog Lake. He mentioned this to Captain Dickens, who replied that he didn't think they were any more discontented than usual, and that there was no cause for anxiety. We didn't know then that Louis Riel was sending couriers back and forth, and that they had been crossing the river at Pipestone Creek, two miles east of the fort. He had sent word to the Indians at Frog Lake that if the moon turned black on the night of April 1, it would mean that the Great Spirit was with them, and they were to kill the white men. They did not understand, as he did, that an eclipse of the moon was expected on that date.

As spring approached, my sister Kitty and I were very anxious to see more of the country, as we had been so shut in during the winter. After much coaxing, we were given permission on April 2 to pack a picnic basket and leave early the next morning to walk along the crest of the hills where most of the snow had

melted; but we were told we must keep in sight of the fort. However, this picnic never materialized. We were awakened by Mother at one o'clock in the morning, and told that Mr. and Mrs. Quinney, and Mr. and Mrs. Mann and family, had arrived from Onion Lake. They had been brought down by some friendly Indians with the warning that, that morning, all the white men at Frog Lake had been massacred, with the exception of two employees of the Hudson's Bay Company.

We immediately went to work to barricade the windows with sacks of flour, leaving the centre pane of each window for a loop-hole. The men worked very quietly and quickly, for there was the possibility of attack at any moment. We older girls had to hold the lamps and candles to light the way for the men, who finished their task before daybreak.

Sentries were posted at different points around the buildings. Then we set up a sort of barricade between the buildings forming the square of the fort, with carts, wagons and cordwood. It was a very poor defence, but the best that we could hurriedly set up at such short notice. The next day every civilian in the fort was sworn in as a special constable by my father, who was a justice of the peace. This included myself and two sisters and a brother. Sentries were placed in each of the five buildings in the fort, each one doing duty for two hours at a time. The watchword was passed every fifteen minutes, my two sisters and I taking our places regularly in the watch, which lasted two weeks.

During this time we practised shooting with our rifles and revolvers. We were constantly on our toes, expecting at any moment that the Indians might come. Incidentally, I passed my sixteenth birthday while we were barricaded in the fort, and though I didn't expect the usual party, I greatly appreciated all the good wishes for a happier birthday next year.

We could not have withstood a siege even for a few days, since the fort was built on a flat with the hills around us; and though there were lots of provisions in the store, we had no water in the fort, but had to get it up from the river in barrels—a distance of about four hundred yards. It seems strange for a Hudson's Bay fort that no well had been dug within its walls.

I used to be on sentry duty from three to five every afternoon, looking north toward the hills over which the Indians would be likely to come. One day, quite a way to the right of the regular road, I saw something black thrown up in the air. I knew it felt too heavily to be a crow on the wing, so I called to my father downstairs to come quickly, all the time keeping my eye on the spot.

In a few minutes we saw a man dragging himself over the ridge. At once there was great excitement in the fort. Some of the men ran out and brought him in. It turned out to be young Henry Quinn, a nephew of Indian Agent Quinn of Frog Lake. He was to have been shot too, but he managed to make a get-away by running into the woods. He told us that for seven miles he had crawled through scrub brush, on his hands and knees. Making a long detour to get to the fort, he had travelled about thirty-five miles in all.



The two principal chiefs in the Rebellion of 1885 are shown here after their capture. Front row: Horse Child, Big Bear's youngest son; Big Bear; Chief of Police Stewart of Hamilton; Poundmaker. Back row: Cst. R. Y. Black; Father Cochlin; Supt. R. B. Deane, N.W.M.P.; Father Andre; Beverly Robinson, K.C.

He could not speak, for his tongue was badly swollen; but when he was brought around that evening, he was able to tell us of his experience, and how he saw his uncle and the others being shot down—which horrified us all. This man seemed to have a charmed life. He later had two other narrow escapes. One of them occurred when Captain Dickens decided to send out scouts, as I shall tell further on.

One dark night, a mounted policeman, nick-named "Grizzly" because of his beard, was on sentry duty on the east side of the house. From his position he could see dark patches of earth near the house, where the snow had melted. As he watched, he presently saw three crouching figures making their way along the ground, right up against the house. They would move slowly, stopping at intervals as they came. Grizzly shot off his gun to give the alarm. The whole fort was immediately aroused and everyone ran to his post. I remember how sleepy I was as I picked up my rifle to "fix" the sight—which meant wetting my finger, then the sight, and then rubbing the sight with the sulphur end of a match, so that it would glow in the dark. I had hardly finished this when it was discovered that the three figures were three pigs which had got out of their pen! You can imagine the shouts of hearty laughter that followed.

On April 14, for some unexplained reason, Captain Dickens insisted upon sending out two of his men, Dave Cowan and Clarence Loasby, and one civilian, Henry Quinn, to locate the Indians. The Reverend Mr. Quinney sided with him, but my father strongly opposed this plan. He felt they didn't know the country well enough, nor did they understand the Indian tactics. He gave his opinion that the Indians would thereby gain three saddle horses and as many rifles and revolvers, while we would be greatly weakened. But all my father could say to dissuade them seemed useless. Sergeant John Martin, was just as much opposed to that unfortunate move on the part of his superior officer, but it was not for him to remonstrate.

The men were sent out that evening. They were to follow the bank of the river, going west toward Frog Lake. We anxiously awaited their return, hoping to see them back by dawn, but the morning wore on and there was no sign of them. Had the Indians got them, or what had happened?

At three o'clock that afternoon the Indians, fully two hundred and fifty strong and all mounted, made their appearance on the ridge about four hundred yards north of the fort. Their first act was to shoot several of the Company's cattle, which had strayed in that direction. They then made fires and commenced to cook some of the newly killed beef. Shortly after this we saw, approaching the fort, an old Indian who had once been an employee of the Company. He brought a note to my father from Big Bear, written by Mr. H. R. Halpin of Beaver River post, now their prisoner. They asked for tea, tobacco, a blanket, and some kettles, all of which they got.

Another message followed, requesting my father to meet some of their head men at their camp. He agreed to go out on condition that they would meet him half way, which they did. They came forward and shook hands with him in a very friendly manner, spread a blanket on the ground and asked him to sit down. The pipe of peace was passed around. But there seemed to be one Indian that was very suspicious. He thought my father was trying to protect the police. There was some heated argument as the other Indians told him he was wrong. At this, he placed the muzzle of his rifle at my father's temple; but an old woman who had been sitting in the outer circle, like a flash, thrust herself between the rifle and my father and said, "You can't shoot this man. He's a friend!" She then told them this story:

In midwinter she had stopped at the fort on her way from Battleford to Onion Lake, with her son-in-law and little six-weeks old grandchild, whose mother had died at its birth. The baby had been fed only on rabbit brains and was very ill. As the old woman sat

in front of the Carron stove in the shop, trying to get warm, my father found out her sad plight through his interpreter. He told her to come and see his wife, who would give her something to help the baby. My mother always kept some very simple remedies on hand. In a short while she had the old woman feeling much happier, having told her how to make this simple food; and had sent her on her way with the baby wrapped up in clean warm clothes.

After hearing this story, the Indians standing by severely reproved the hot-headed one who had been so ready with his gun. They then told my father that they had been sent to tell him that all the chiefs and head men wanted to have a serious talk with him the following morning. They were not permitted to say anything more. Arrangements were made to meet at the same place. He was then told to return to the fort and to keep his family close to him, and to sleep well, as we would not be disturbed during the night. They shook hands and returned to their own camp.

Everything was quiet during the night, but we kept watch as before. The next morning my father and Captain Dickens held a long consultation. Both were very anxious to use every reasonable endeavour to get the Indians to go back to their reserves. This would give us some respite at least, during which time we were hopeful of being reinforced from Battleford or elsewhere. Meanwhile, the sentries in our house were watching the Indians where they were waiting. Before going out, my father told them that if they saw the Indians laying hands on him forcibly, to fire upon them, even at the risk of killing himself.

You can imagine how we McLeans felt, seeing him walk out, unarmed, to meet them. We knew he was ready to sacrifice himself to protect us, and remembering that there were some hotheads in the camp, we waited with bated breath to see what sort of a reception he would be given.

As he approached the Indians, they came forward, and we were relieved to see them shake hands with him, as before. But after a few words, he went on with them, towards their camp. This puzzled and rather alarmed us, as the agreement had been to hold the parley in sight of the fort. But before he had taken many steps, he turned and waved his handkerchief, which was the prearranged signal that all appeared to be well.

We learned afterwards that the chiefs were not there, as arranged, but were waiting for him beyond the ridge. They assured him that he had no reason to fear, as they were all friendly with him. Knowing full well how the Indians despise a coward, he decided to go on to their camp. When he arrived there, a long consultation followed. But in the midst of the deliberations, some women and boys rushed in, shouting out: "The Redcoats! The Redcoats! They are going to shoot us!"

In an instant, every man was in his saddle, and they rushed upon the three unfortunate scouts whom Captain Dickens had sent out the day before—for it was these men returning. Finding that the Indians were camped between them and the fort, they were riding in at full gallop, hoping to gain the safety of the barricade before the Indians could hit them.

But watching from my loop-hole, I saw Cowan and Loasby knocked off their horses. Both of them lay very still. Some of the Indians approached them, dismounted, and removed their rifles, revolvers, and cartridge belts.

In the meantime, Henry Quinn, who was riding "Firefly," a most beautiful horse belonging to the Mounted Police, had wheeled round and galloped back into the woods, with the Indians in full pursuit. This was his second miraculous escape.

When they had ridden away, I suddenly heard my sister call out: "He's moving! He's not dead!" It was Loasby, who had feigned death while the Indians were taking his weapons. But he was badly wounded. Stanley Simpson, a Company clerk, at once ran out, managed to get him to his feet, and half carrying him, brought him into the fort.

There seemed to be confusion everywhere. Inside the fort, Loasby needed immediate attention. My mother sent us to bring clean sheets to use for bandages. The box of a buckboard was lifted down to the ground and a feather bed placed in it to make him as comfortable as possible.

We were all very anxious to know whether my father was still alive, so my sister Amelia and I went up to the camp. Some of the Indians came forward to meet us and seemed astonished at our nerve.

"Aren't you afraid?" they asked us.

"No! We were never taught to be afraid of Indians," we answered.

This was a good introduction, since the Indians always have a great respect for courage. At this point I cannot remember everything very distinctly, because of our feeling so deeply at seeing Dad safe, but we had to control our emotions in front of the Indians. I remember our standing beside him for a few minutes while he gave us a message to take to my mother—a few words of advice on what seemed best to do at the time. With this message we returned to the fort.

Meanwhile my father asked permission from the chiefs to write a note to his wife. They gladly consented, but insisted that his letter be translated to them by the interpreter. Several such notes passed back and forth between Father and Mother, and at last there was found a way out for all. Father explained in the first note that the Indians had decided to keep him a prisoner, and made him swear that he would not leave them. They sent word that our family must come to the camp, and we would be well taken care of. Big Bear had consented to our bringing the democrat and team of horses and a tent.

My father inquired what would happen to the other Hudson's Bay employees. It was decided that they could make their choice whether to go to the camp or stay with the Redcoats. They decided to leave.

Big Bear said as long as our family were in the fort they would not attack the Redcoats, and the family would be safe. Captain Dickens sent a message asking the Indians to allow them two hours to get away. This they consented to do. In the next note we received, my father had advised that we take as long a time as reasonable in getting ready to leave the fort. My mother understood this message as she was just as anxious as he was to give the police time to get away.

There seemed to be more confusion than ever in the fort. But through it all my little mother remained so quiet and composed that we all felt her steadying influence. She began at once to do what she could to help everybody. What ages it seemed before the police were ready to leave! Their only means of escape was to use the flat boat or scow which my father had had the employees build during our two weeks' barricade. Getting the scow down to the river was slow work. Loasby was carried down in the box of the buckboard

and safely laid in the boat. All this time we anxiously watched from the fort, busying ourselves with our own preparations till we were sure they had reached the river. We continued to watch as we ourselves slowly moved out of the poor old deserted fort. The river was a raging torrent with huge slabs of ice piling up. It was a miracle that they ever got across safely. It seemed to us that the scow might be upset any minute.

As if that were not enough, a new danger now assailed the police. We were no sooner out of the fort than some of the young bloods who were on horseback raced down to the river bank and began to fire upon them. For our own safety's sake we couldn't show any anxiety for them. We couldn't tell whether any of them were shot or killed. The Indians kept firing until they were out of range. We saw them land safely across the river. That was our last view of them as we went over the hill to the camp. How did they get along?

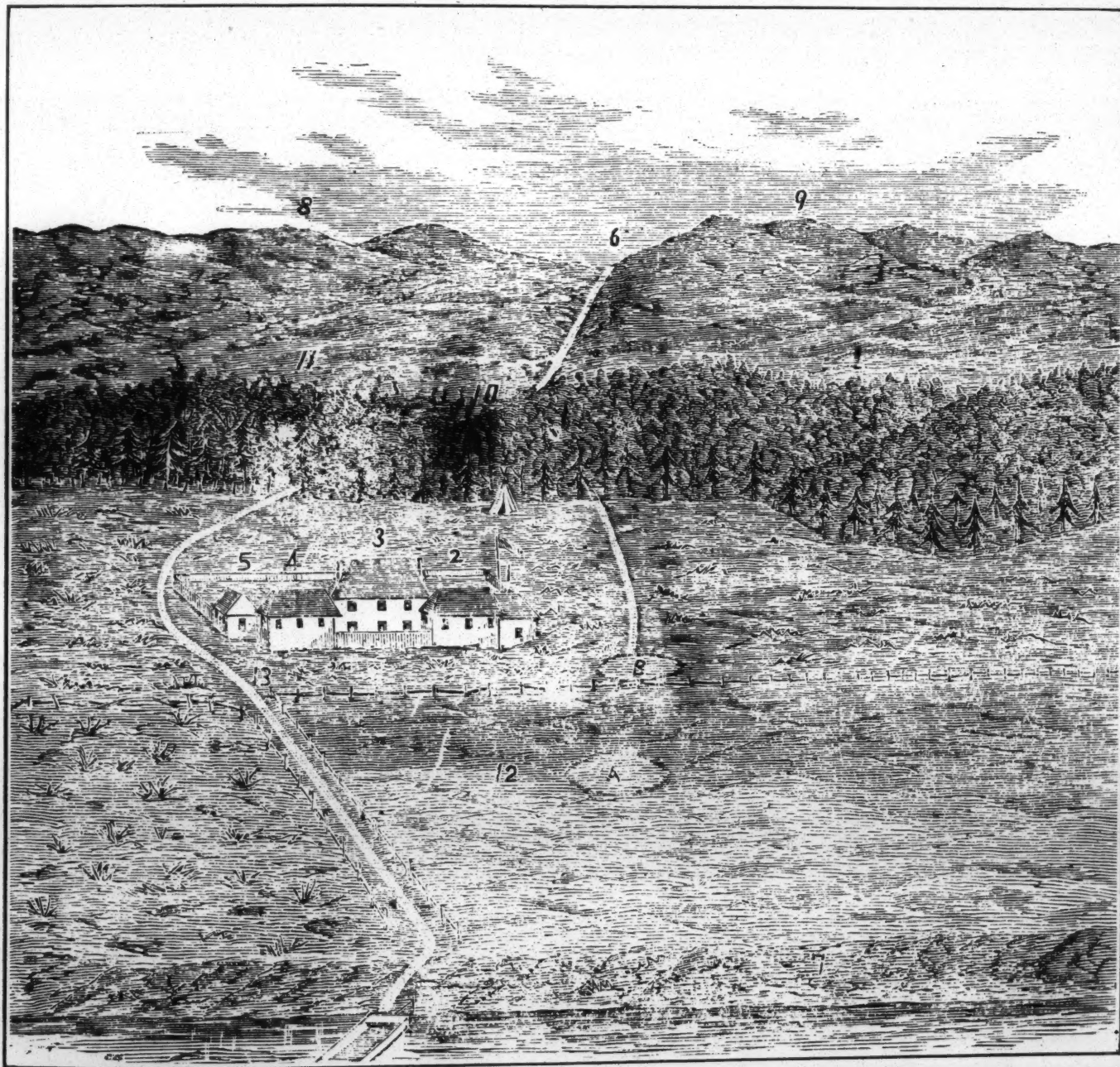
Had anyone been killed or wounded? These questions crossed our anxious thoughts continually in the weeks that followed.

We were all dressed warmly, since my father had advised us that he was sure there was going to be a change in the weather. As we were nearing the camp, some of the Indians came out to meet us, showing my mother all the respect they knew how to. They gave a hand in setting up the tent which she had sent out ahead of her, and rendered very useful little services in view of the impending snow-storm, which came upon us during the night as expected.

So was closed the brief chapter of our life at Fort Pitt, and thus began our two months of discomfort and anxiety as prisoners of Big Bear.

*In a subsequent instalment, Miss McLean will relate the story of her family's captivity among the Indians, and of their rescue.*

This sketch of Fort Pitt by Cst. Smith appeared in the special Rebellion number of the "Winnipeg Daily Sun." It is not entirely accurate. 1 is the police barracks; 2, fur store; 3, the McLean's house; 6, trail from Frog Lake; 10, where Loasby was shot (the trees should be leafless poplar); 11, where Cowan was killed. Compare with photo, page 4, Dec. 1945 "Beaver." Courtesy Fred H. Stewart.



# ALONG MACKENZIE'S R



On her voyage to the Arctic sea, the SS. "McKenzie River" stops to unload freight at Fort Wrigley.

At the Ramparts. Far across the river, the steamer labours towards the narrow Ramparts gorge.

# 'S RIVER

# IN 1946

Photographs by  
George Zukerman



ONE hundred and fifty seven summers have come and gone since the first white man gazed on this mighty river that ever since has borne his name, and many famous fur traders and explorers have travelled on its swirling wide waters, or along its frozen, snow-covered surface. The Indians who live along its banks have seen a strange procession of water craft succeed one another down the changing years—birch bark canoe of Dog-Rib, Hare, and Slave; high-prowed birch-bark of the fur trader; square-sailed York boat; small screw steamer; puffing, splashing sternwheeler with its string of barges; fast, powerful diesel tug; and canvas canoe driven by a noisy "kicker."

Now even the day of the sternwheeler is drawing to a close, and only modern, propeller-driven vessels will soon be seen navigating these historic waters. But though modernity has come to the Mackenzie, its veneer is still a very thin one, and only a little way back from the river banks, the unchanged wilderness stretches for mile upon mile, as it did in the days of Mackenzie.

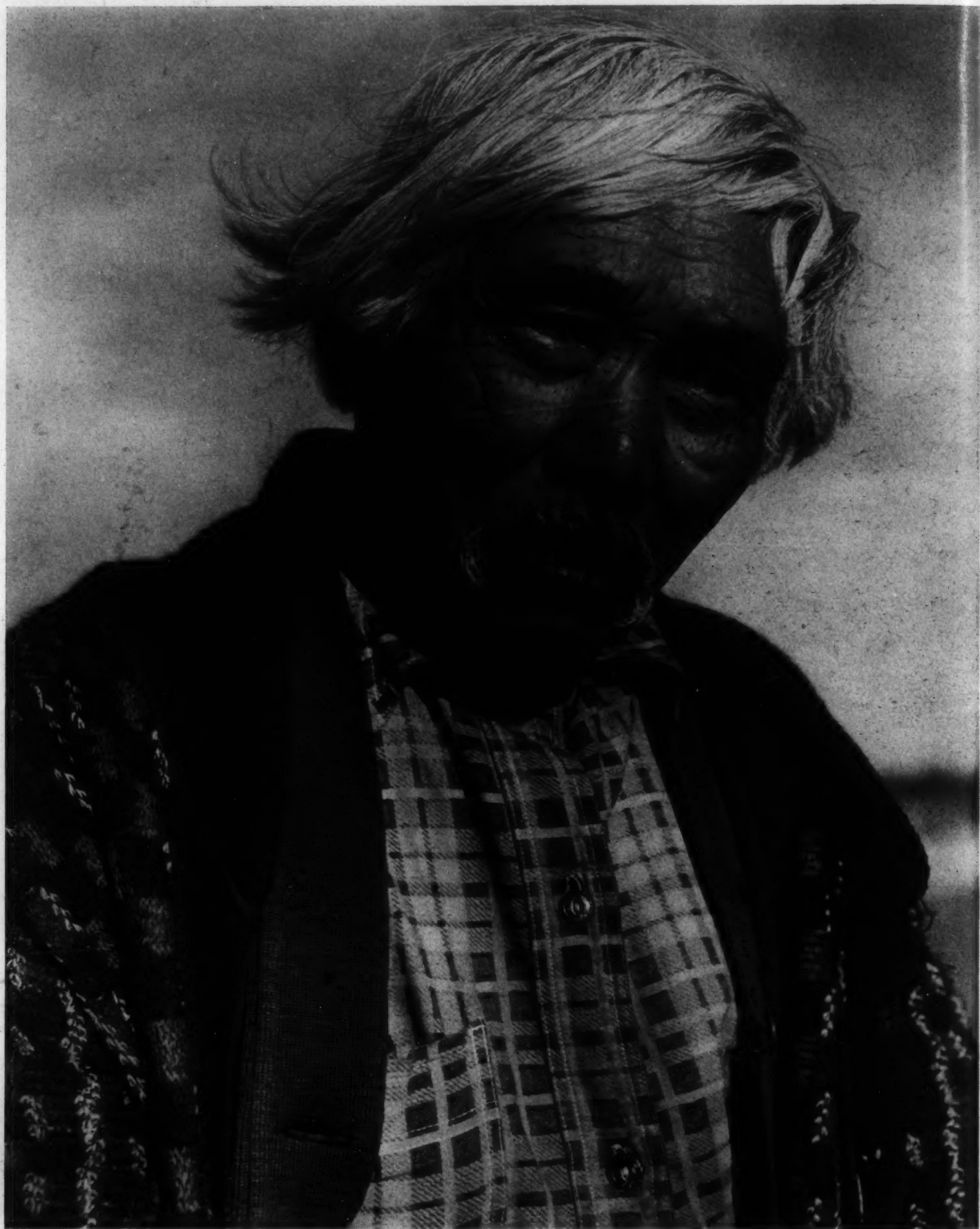
All photos from World News Services.





Opposite: Indian mother and child.

Above: The Company's little sternwheeler, "McKenzie River," has been carrying freight and passengers and pushing barges for nearly forty years.



" . . . My way of life  
Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf . . ."

An Indian patriarch looks with sorrow on the changes that are being wrought in the land of his fathers.



The era of bark canoes, York boats, and ox-carts has given way to the age of mechanization. Above: Capts. Swanson and Elyea on the bridge of one of the Company's diesel tugs. Below: Bill Carson, post manager at Fort McPherson—formerly Peel's River House—sits at the controls of a tractor and hauls three sled loads of fur bales from the post to the waiting steamer.



# Reminiscences of Fort Rupert

Ralph Travis



Potlatch at Fort Rupert. Piles of Hudson's Bay "Point" blankets are being counted out for giving away. Haida canoes are drawn up on the beach. H. I. Smith

**S**LAVERY, throughout the British Empire, was abolished in 1833. A Vancouver Island woman remembers the day very well when a slave, in the village in which she is still living, was killed by his master.

She is Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson, who lives at Fort Rupert, on the northeastern tip of Vancouver Island. The murdered man was the last slave to be held by the Kwakiutl tribe of coast Indians, who once were extensive slave owners and slave traders. His master, the son of a chief, stabbed him to death at the close of a drunken "potlatch" early in the '90's.

Mrs. Wilson, who was born in 1870, has seen the passing of an era whose last glimmerings are still touching with colour the sombre reaches of the British Columbia coast. When she was born, sea-otter still swarmed about the islands of the Inside Passage, and Russian windjammers still sailed into the lovely lee of Vancouver Island to barter with the Indians for the otters' skins. The fierce Queen Charlotte Island Haidas were in the heyday of their raiding glory, falling upon the Tsimpsheans and Coast Salish for slaves and goods. The Hudson's Bay post at Fort Rupert was a haven more than once, in Mrs. Wilson's childhood, for lone Indians pursued for their lives by marauding braves.

Her father, Robert Hunt, came to Victoria from Dorsetshire in the spring of 1850, in the sailing ship *Norman Morison*. On the passenger list of the ship he was listed as a labourer, but he must have applied himself to his work with remarkable vigour, because in 1873 he had amassed enough money to buy out the Hudson's Bay post at Fort Rupert and operate it himself.

Fort Rupert is built along a tidal flat in a cove just around the corner from the northern coast of Vancouver Island. Named after the first steamer on the west coast, the bay, Beaver Harbour, makes a fine anchorage. Eleven miles southeast is an abandoned coal mine once worked by Royal Engineers to supply warships, and Russian ships often anchored at Beaver Harbour to obtain coal and water. As a harbour, however, the Indians have known about it for centuries. Every year, since time immemorial, Indians have come there for a great feast on the clams which are thick among the sands, until now there is a great bank of clamshells at least two miles long, half a mile wide, and at least fifty feet high. Most of the airport at nearby Port Hardy was surfaced with these broken clamshells.

Robert Hunt was married twice, first to a white woman who died two years after her marriage, and then to an Alaskan woman, the mother of Mrs. Wilson. His descendants, who have remained in the Fort Rupert and Port Hardy area ever since, occupy a prominent place in the life of the district. Several have served with honour in both world wars. When he died in 1893 at the age of sixty-five, his business, which is still run by his grandson, William Cadwallader, was solidly established.

His daughter, Mrs. Wilson, still lives in Fort Rupert, about a hundred yards from the location of the old fort in which she was born. The fort, built in 1849 just south of the Indian village, was destroyed a few years ago, except for the huge rough-hewn stone chimney. Mrs. Wilson lives in a small suburban style frame house cheek by jowl with the framework of a century

old Indian lodge built of huge totem-carved cedar logs. All the Indians have built wooden houses, complete with gingerbread carvings, gables, and pillared verandas, but their old dwellings, in which one family lived in each corner, are still standing. One is still used as a dance hall and community gathering place.

Lizzie Hunt was educated by an Anglican missionary and his wife at Alert Bay. As a result of their teaching, she retains to this day a touch of an English accent in her beautifully modulated voice. In 1899 she married Daniel Wilson, and with him moved from place to place about the coast wherever his work as a cannery manager took him. They spent twenty years at Rivers Inlet, and for a time lived at Alert Bay. For the last eighteen years, since the death of her husband, she has lived at Fort Rupert.

Her husband, a Scot, had a consuming interest in things Indian, and with his wife delved into all the Indian lore he could. Mrs. Wilson's Indian heritage was naturally a great help to him. Because of their researches, Mrs. Wilson has possibly as complete a knowledge of the customs and manners of the coast Indians as anybody in Canada. She can speak several Indian languages and can tell any number of tales and legends. With her brother, Robert Hunt, she gave a great deal of help to the great anthropologist Boaz.

The stories she is always willing to tell make an enthralling history of the district. When she was eight or nine, for instance, some marauding Cowichan Indians captured and killed a sister of a chief at Fort Rupert. "The chief's wife," she relates, "comforted her husband by telling him her brothers would recapture his sister's body. A week later we saw their canoe coming back, with four Cowichan heads stuck on spears. The body of the murdered woman, which they had brought back, was then prepared for burial and given an elaborate funeral. As a finishing touch, a Cowichan woman who had herself been captured was dressed in finery, loaded with fine presents, and then led out to a tree in the branches of which the coffin was placed. She knew what was going to happen to her. As she was led out to the burial place she was crying all the way. At the foot of the tree, she was shot."

Mrs. Wilson also tells of a Haida chieftain who literally talked himself to death. In the closing years



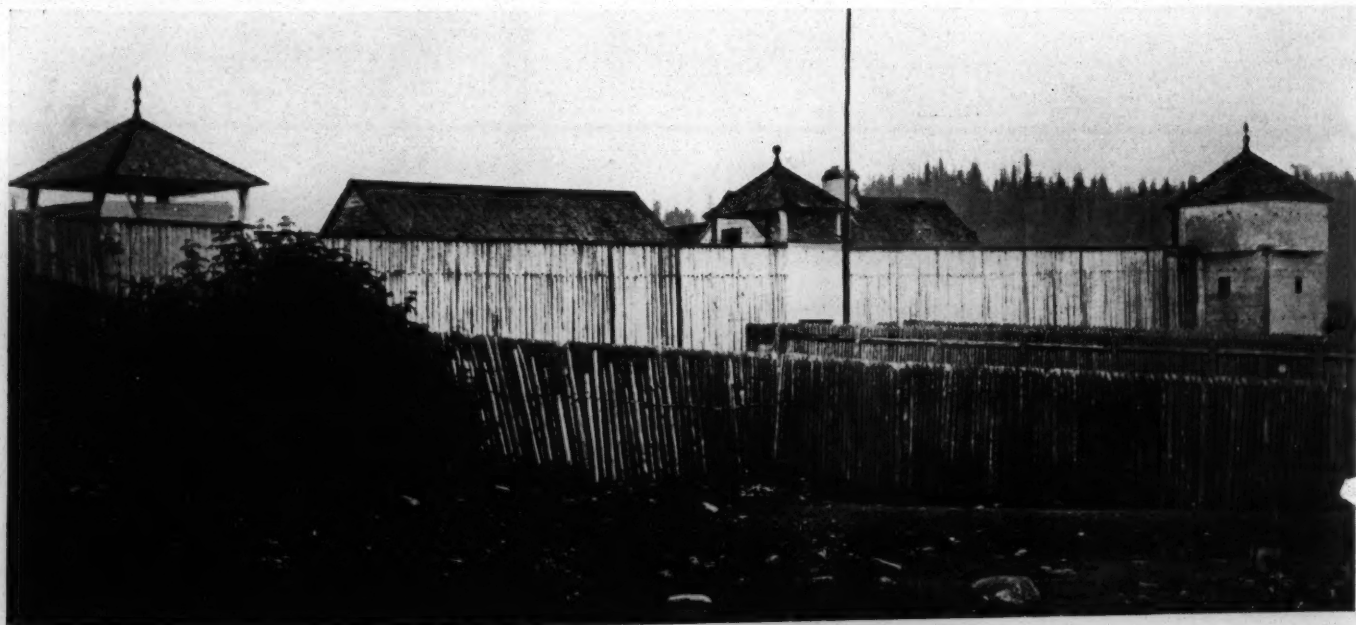
Mrs. Wilson wearing a Chilkat blanket and holding a Kwakiutl rain hat woven of spruce root.

of the last century a Haida, together with two of his wives and his son, happened to put into Fort Rupert, only to find that the Kwakiutls were at war with his tribe. He took refuge at the fort. Mr. Hunt cautioned him to slip away quietly that night under cover of the thick fog that lay over the harbour, and kept him in safety until midnight.

At midnight he left, with his wives and his chattels. Silently they paddled into the fog, and had almost reached a small island at the entrance to the bay—Mrs. Wilson can point out the exact spot—when he could no longer restrain himself. "I am the Thunderbird!" he cried, "I am the killer whale! No Kwakiutl can find me! I raid the Kwakiutl villages! The Kwakiutl are women!" At the top of his voice he hurled taunts and insults at the sleeping braves.

Fort Rupert was well fortified against the attacks of the belligerent Coast Indians.

B.C. Archives



Wakened by his shouting, the villagers jumped, raging, into their canoes and immediately set out in pursuit. After a weird, protracted search among the eerie billows of the fog, a war-canoe closed with the Haida chief, who had all the time been defying his enemies to find him. A brave raised his spear and stabbed the chief to death. His goods became the property of his conquerors, while his son and his wives became Kwakiutl slaves.

As time went on, after slave trading was prohibited, slaves became rarer and rarer until only a few—all old people who had been captured in their youth—were held in bondage. At last one old man (slave to the son of a Fort Rupert chief) was the sole survivor. He bade fair to end his days peacefully until a potlatch was held in Fort Rupert just before the turn of the century.

When a potlatch was held, each man could gain prestige and tribal rank by giving away as many of his possessions as he could. In theory, since all these gifts had to be returned with interest—often 100 percent—a year later, this was merely aboriginal banking, besides being a means of dispersing possessions as a precaution against a hostile raid. For some reason, however, a man gained more merit by destroying his goods than by giving them away, and in the case of slaves this meant killing them.

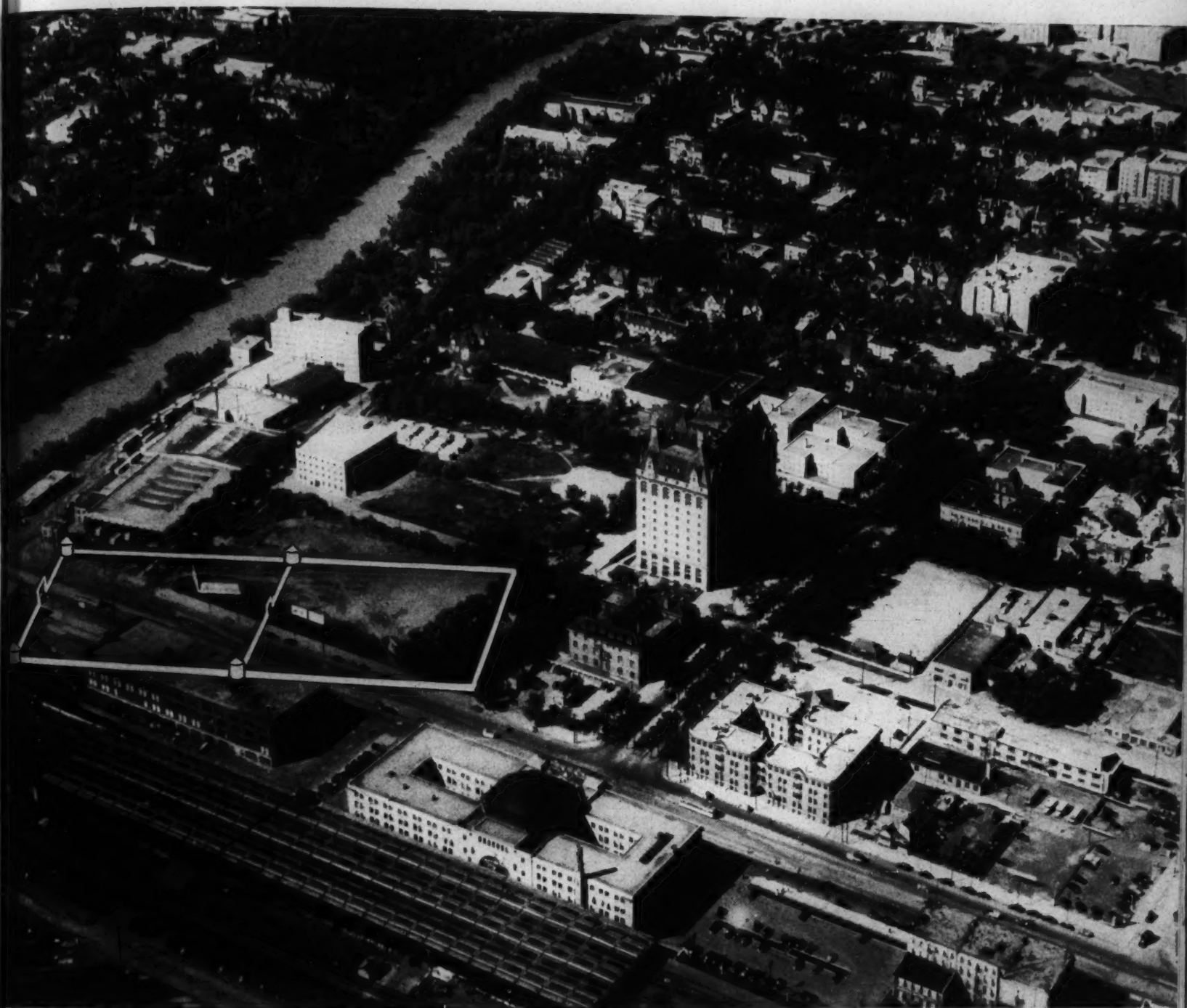
Killing slaves, of course, had been forbidden for years by British law. As the potlatch proceeded the chief's son got very drunk, until finally he was almost mad—mad enough to disregard the white man's statutes. "Why must I not kill my slaves? My father could kill his!" An hour later he caught sight of his sole remaining servitor. Whipping out a knife, he chased the feeble old man, who ran screaming from him, slashing at him and shouting. Soon, a mass of cuts, spouting blood everywhere and begging for mercy, the old slave fell to the ground and died. Mrs. Wilson was not present herself on this occasion, but her sister was a witness to the fray.

As soon as news of the crime reached Victoria, a warship was despatched to bring the murderer to justice. Because the chief's son occupied a high place in Indian regard and because of his influential father, Mrs. Wilson says pressure was brought upon the authorities to save him from the gallows. He was, indeed, made to serve a prison term and then returned to his home.

After his release a missionary at Fort Rupert was astonished at the man's command of the English language. "Yes," replied the Indian proudly, "I learned it in jail." Incidentally, because he had seen the world, attended a ceremonial court, seen a penitentiary, and had a special ship call for him, he was highly regarded by his fellow villagers.

Kwakiutl Indians singing and drumming while they gamble on the beach at Fort Rupert. The stake consists of the pile of clothes and blankets. The sticks are counters. Their opponents are out of the picture on the left. H. I. Smith





C.N.R. Photo

## Historic Winnipeg

**T**HIS aerial view of an historic part of Winnipeg shows the location of Upper Fort Garry in relation to the streets and buildings of to-day. The river is the Assiniboine, which joins the Red about 300 yards out of the picture to the left. At the bottom of the picture is the Union Station (with black dome) and part of the C.N.R. yards which cover the old "Hudson's Bay flats" where the Indians used to camp. Main Street runs past the station, across the site of the fort, and over the Assiniboine. The long building, where the nearest bastion of the fort is shown, is Hudson's Bay House.

Originally, the fort comprised only the rectangle shown on the left hand side, between the four bastions. In the 1850's the north wall was demolished and the fort extended as far as the castellated stone

gate which can be seen among the trees. This gate is all that remains of Upper Fort Garry. On the right of it is seen the Manitoba Club, and above that, the tall Fort Garry Hotel, both standing beside tree-lined Broadway.

The parking space in the lower right hand corner, on the far side of Main Street, is where the first Hudson's Bay Company department store stood. It opened in 1881, when the fort was demolished, and closed in 1926, when it was succeeded by the present store on Portage Avenue. In the upper right hand corner, part of the Manitoba legislative building can be seen, and to the left of it, the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor. All the land seen on this side of the Assiniboine formed part of the old Hudson's Bay Reserve, surrounding Fort Garry.

# NATURALISTS on HUDSON BAY

James Isham, Alexander Light and Humphrey Marten may be considered the pioneer naturalists of Canada.

by James L. Baillie Jr.

SO much of our present knowledge of the natural history of Canada is due to the groundwork done by our earliest investigators, that it is incumbent upon naturalists of the present generation to scan the record of these pioneers and review their accomplishments.

Viewed by modern standards, the work they did was primitive; yet, considering the handicaps under which they laboured, their contributions to knowledge were significant.

It is an odd fact that our earliest students of nature carried on their studies along our northern fringe of

civilization where the botany and zoology remain to this day imperfectly known.

On Hudson Bay, where one must look for the record of our first naturalists, officials of the Hudson's Bay Company and other explorers were making collections or notes of our flora and fauna upwards of two centuries ago, at a time when the plants and animals of the rest of Canada had been practically unexploited by any European.

To evaluate properly the work of these early naturalists, one must glance at the state of knowledge of North American natural history at the time the first of them began his investigations. Precious little had been published. A few books, it is true, had appeared in London and Paris, containing some account of the more conspicuous of our plants and animals, and others had told of the game animals and the fur trade; but these publications detailed information that was "more curious than edifying." Of these authors, the most important were Sagard, 1632 (Georgian Bay); Josselyn, 1672 (New England); La Hontan, 1703 (Eastern Canada); Lawson, 1709 (North Carolina); and Catesby, 1731 (Carolina, Florida, and the Bahamas). Only Catesby merited the title of naturalist, however, and until the appearance of his illustrated *Natural History of Carolina*, etc., the outside world, and science, knew little of North American natural history.

It was in this atmosphere of biological darkness that one finds Canada's first naturalists commencing their studies at the Hudson's Bay trading posts. Just one year after the appearance of the first volume of Catesby's book in London, there appeared at York Factory the first of several men who were destined to make names for themselves on Hudson Bay by reason of their early studies of natural history.

James Isham and Alexander Light, the earliest of these, were truly the pioneer Canadian naturalists. They submitted collections to England about 1745, assembled to help while away the long, dreary hours of leisure experienced in the fur countries of that day. Their specimens have not survived, but they were utilized by the British naturalists of the time, who certainly had examined no previous collections of plants or animals from Hudson Bay, and probably none of any consequence from anywhere else in Canada.

One can readily imagine the enthusiasm with which these first collections were anticipated and studied. A lot of the material represented species quite new to the scientific world. Eight of Isham's birds, in fact, had never been previously described, and these were illustrated by George Edwards in Part 3 of his famous *Natural History of Uncommon Birds*, published in 1750. To these, Carl Linnaeus gave official Latin designations in 1758. The new birds were the blue goose, surf scoter, little brown crane, purple martin, marbled and Hudsonian godwits, and spruce and sharp-tailed grouse. Edwards' illustration of the last named, designated the "Long-tailed Grouse," is generally accepted by ornithologists as the earliest representation of the sharp tailed grouse in existence; but Henry Ellis's

Title page of Edwards' work, in which for the first time descriptions were published of eight birds frequenting Hudson Bay.

## A NATURAL HISTORY OF Uncommon BIRDS, AND OF Some other Rare and Undescribed ANIMALS, QUADRUPEDES,     } FISHES, REPTILES,         } INSECTS, &c.

Exhibited in Two Hundred and Ten COPPER-PLATES,  
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With a full and accurate Description of each FIGURE.

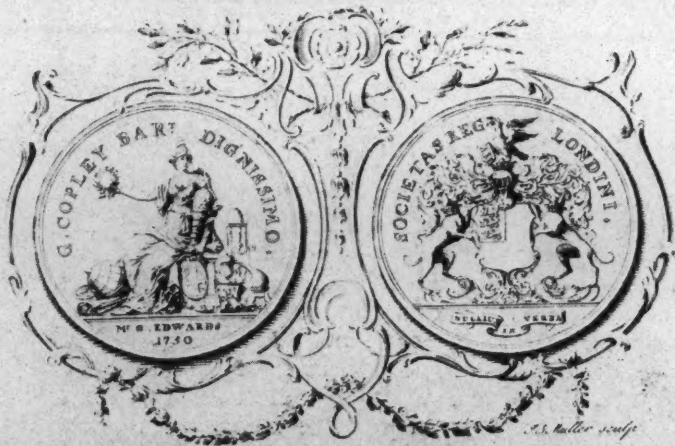
To which is added,

A Brief and General Idea of DRAWING and PAINTING in Water-Colours; with Instructions for ETCHING on Copper with Aqua Fortis: Likewise some Thoughts on the PASSAGE OF BIRDS; and ADDITIONS to many of the SUBJECTS described in this WORK.

In Four PARTS.

By GEORGE EDWARDS,

Library-Keeper to the Royal-College of PHYSICIANS.



LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR, at the College of Physicians, in Warwick-Lane.

plate of the "Brown and Spotted Heathcock," as he called this bird, reproduced in the March 1946 *Beaver*, clearly antedates it by two years.

One is impressed with the paucity of information concerning the lives and accomplishments of these early naturalists, and, so far as I am aware, likenesses of many of them do not exist. Edwards, in acknowledging his indebtedness to Isham in 1750, said that he had "obliged me extremely by furnishing me with more than thirty different Species of Birds, of which we have hitherto had little or no knowledge. . . . As I shall in the Course of this Work have Occasion frequently to mention the above curious Gentleman's Name, it will be here necessary to let the Reader know, that Mr. Isham has been employ'd for many Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and has, for some Years past, been Governor under them at different Times, of several of their Forts and Settlements in the most Northern habitable Parts of America; where at his leisure Times, his commendable Curiosity led him to make a Collection of all the Beasts, Birds, and Fishes of those Countries, as well as the Habits, Toys, and Utensils of the native Americans. The Furs of the Beasts, and the Skins of the Birds were stuffed, and preserved very clean and perfect, and brought to London in the Year 1745. Mr. Isham is now [1749] in London, where he will stay for a short Time, and has favour'd me with the Pleasure of his Conversation."

Isham had been engaged by the Company in 1732 as a writer. He became chief at York Factory (until 1761), and during the same period (1741-5) he was also chief at Prince of Wales Fort.

He wrote two volumes of manuscript at Prince of Wales Fort during a period of sickness in the winter of 1742-3. These contain notes on birds, mammals, fishes, insects and plants, as well as a valuable vocabulary of the Indians, and remarks on trade, climate, etc. In his dedicatory remarks to the volumes—which are still preserved in the archives of his company in London—Isham remarked that "Being in a Disconsolate part of the world, where their is Little Conversation or Divertisement to be had . . . I have in Cold Days and Long winter Nights, amus'd my self with the



The marbled godwit, of which this is a juvenile specimen, was among the eight new birds sent over by Isham and described by Edwards.  
Ducks Unltd.

following Observations. . . ." It is to be hoped that these historic manuscripts, which have never seen the light of day, will soon be published for the edification of all interested in the early history of Canada.

Twenty-nine of Isham's birds were illustrated in Edward's volume of 1750, including the eight new species already mentioned.

York Factory, where Isham collected some of his ornithological specimens.

R.C.A.F.



The Severn Factory journal of Humphrey Marten for April 27, 1761, provides some idea of the esteem in which Isham was held by his associates and by the Indians. Commenting on Isham's death at York, Marten stated that "... the York Fort Packet arrived with the Shocking news of the Death of my Beloved Friend and I may truly say Father Mr. James Isham, who paid the Grand debts on the 13th Instant. I cannot help Condoleing the lose of a Man who was the Idol of the Indians and whose name will be dear to them as long as one is alive that knew him. . . ."

Another Hudson's Bay naturalist, Alexander Light, had been sent to the Bay about 1741 "on account of his interest in Natural History," and made the first collection of Canadian birds, of which there is any record. Four of his specimens\* were the bases of Edwards' hand-coloured figures of 1747, and Edwards expressed his indebtedness to Light for "many such favours." Although Light's birds were figured three years earlier than Isham's, priority is given to the latter in this paper because of the fact that his advent at the Bay preceded Light's by some nine years.

Light had also sent Edwards some natural history specimens from Maryland (northern phalarope) and from South Carolina (box turtle), and these were duly figured in Edwards' volumes of 1743 and 1751.

Henry Ellis, agent for Arthur Dobbs, proprietor of an expedition sent out in 1746 to discover the north-west passage, was the next individual to make notes on the fauna of Hudson Bay. Although not an official of the H B C, Ellis wintered in the Hayes River (1746-7), near York Factory, and his book (1748) contains recognizable descriptions of six birds, nine mammals and seven fishes of the Hudson Bay area. Copperplate figures of seven of these appear in his volume. (See *The Beaver*, March 1946.)

His two ships, *Dobbs Galley* and *California*, had another recorder in the person of Charles Swaine, clerk of the *California*. His volumes (1748) also contain some natural history matter *passim*, according to Coues.

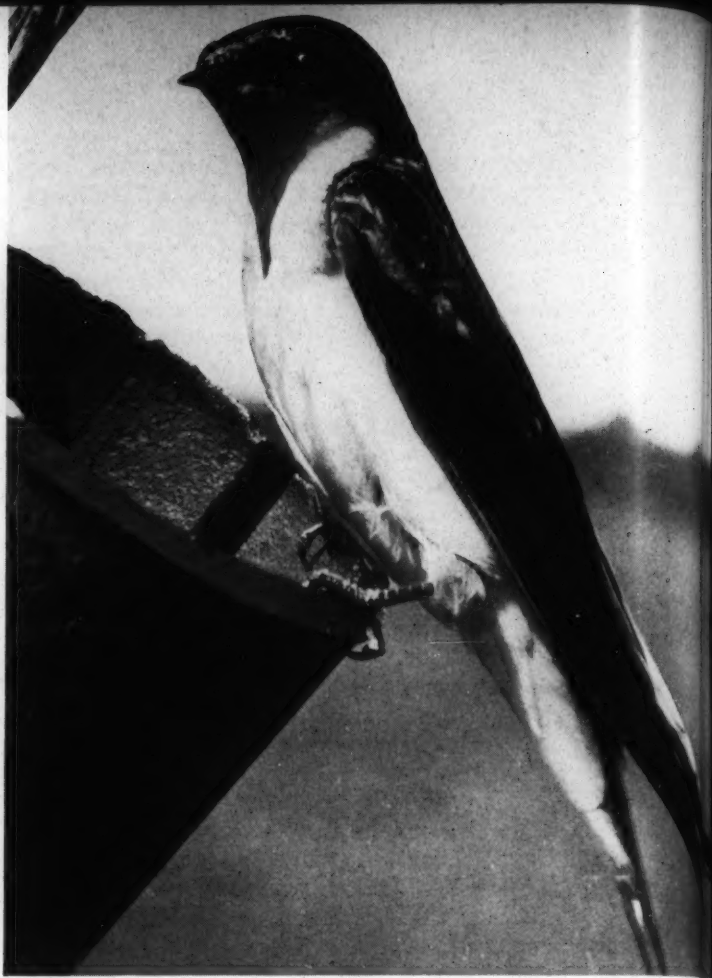
Marten came next, and he may be considered the father of Ontario natural history, as his posts on Hudson Bay included Forts Severn and Albany, which are now within the province of Ontario. Isham and Light were apparently located during their entire stay on the Bay at York and Churchill, which are now part of Manitoba (although Edwards received some notes from Light on the porcupine in a letter written at Fort Albany on August 10, 1742).

Marten was chief at Severn from 1759 to 1761 (as well as in 1767, according to Morton), and at Albany from 1763 to 1774. Born about 1729, he was engaged by the Company in 1750 as a writer. He spent thirty-six years of his life at various trading posts around the west and south coasts of the Bay. In the capacities of writer, clerk, steward, and chief, he spent twenty-five years at York (1750-9, 1761-2, and 1775-86), in addition to his tenure at Severn and Albany.

At Severn, he re-established the factory on Isham's recommendation in 1759, after it had lain abandoned since the French surrendered it, following the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1713. And he was in command at York when that fort fell to the French under Count de La Prouse and was completely destroyed in 1782. Marten was taken to France as a prisoner of war, but returned to re-establish York the following year, at the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris.

In May 1771, in compliance with a desire expressed by the Royal Society of London, the Hudson's Bay

\*Snowy owl, hawk owl, gray gyrfalcon, and female spruce grouse—none of them new to science.—J.L.B.



Humphrey Marten supplied breeding boxes for tree swallows at Albany. This one built its nest in an iron pipe.

Paul Chipman.

Company requested the governors of their various posts on the Bay to submit specimens of animals. Marten, at that time governor of Fort Albany on James Bay, replied to the request in the autumn as follows: "I hope to find the Surgeon [Dr. Thomas Hutchins] versed in these Matters, for as to my self I Frankly own my Ignorance in Zoology, yet I believe by next Year to give a more distinct and exact History of The Swallows and Martins in this part of the World then hath hither to appeared. For this spring I caused breeding Boxes to be placed within and without the Fort, to one of which boxes, a brace of those Birds [Tree Swallows] took kindly, and hatched their young, and became so tame as to permit me to come within two Yards of them, as I observe that many Animals are to be preserved in Spirits, it is a pity a few glass Bottles were not sent to Albany for that purpose. I rece'd from Mr. Graham some papers of Mr. Pennants on this Subject, in consequence of which, have made a very small collection of birds &c, which I fear are no rarities, I have also consigned to You, a Fine Brace of Partridges a Cock & Hen (as I think) both alive, they Feed on small berrys of all kinds & Buds of Trees and take to Pease and barley pretty well also a Buck Rabbit, but could not get a Doe to live."

This shipment, in two boxes, including similar specimens from Moose Factory (the sender of which was not recorded) reached London in October, via the Company's ship *Prince Rupert*. Although meagre, Marten's collection constituted the first collection of natural history objects ever made in what is now the province of Ontario.

The thanks of the Royal Society resulted in the receipt of further shipments of specimens from the Bay. Marten, about 1774, "sent home several hundred specimens of animals and plants, collected at Albany

Fort, of which he was Governor." This lot would appear to have been distinct from and more extensive than his "very small collection" submitted in 1771.

No record has reached print of the contents of Marten's boxes, and he does not seem to have sent any manuscripts to London to accompany or supplement them. His work as a naturalist, in fact, seems to have been pretty generally overlooked. Samuel Hearne, writing in 1795, had this to say of Marten's contributions: "Mr. Graham . . . [and] the late Mr. Hutchins . . . both contributed very largely to the collection sent home to the Royal Society. It is, however, no less true, that the late Mr. Humphry Martin, many years Governor of Albany Fort, sent home several hundred specimens to complete that collection; but, by some mistake nothing of the kind was placed to the credit of his

A plate from Edwards' "Natural History of Uncommon Birds," Part III, published in 1750. This was the first printed picture of the bird we know as the spruce grouse. Below is a reproduction of part of the text accompanying it. "Brown and Spotted Heathcock" was the name Ellis gave to the sharp-tailed grouse in his book of 1748.



*The Black and Spotted HEATH-COCK.*

This Bird was brought from Hudson's-Bay by Mr. Isham, where it is called the *Wood-Partridge*. It is plainly of the Heathcock, or Grouse Kind, and is, I am confident, the Male of one I have published in my first Volume of Birds, P. 71, by the Name of the *Brown and Spotted Heathcock*; that differing from this just as the Hen in our black Game differs from the Cock: So that I have not the least Doubt in myself, but that the Bird here described, and that at P. 71, are Cock and Hen. This Bird, I believe, has never been figured or described.

account. Even my respected friend Mr. Pennant, who, with a candour that does him honour, has so generously acknowledged his obligations to all to whom he thought he was indebted for information when he was writing his *Arctic Zoology* . . . has not mentioned his name; but I am fully persuaded that it entirely proceeded from a want of knowing the person; and as Mr. Hutchins succeeded him at Albany in the year 1774, everything that has been sent over from that part has been placed to his account."

Despite Hearne's effort to credit Marten with some of this pioneer work, Marten's name does not appear at all in the historical chapter of Edward A. Preble's *Biological Investigation of the Hudson Bay Region*, published in 1902. He is certainly entitled to a place among our early workers in natural history, and it is to be regretted that more is not known of his contributions in that field of science.

He and his predecessors, handicapped by meagre equipment, lack of associates, and limited literature, laid the foundations upon which our present knowledge of the flora and fauna of Canada is based, first in Manitoba, and then in Ontario. In Marten's case, ill-health was an additional handicap. In 1768, he was granted a year's leave of absence from Albany on this account. In 1769, he again returned to England from Albany, suffering "from a recrudescence of a disorder . . . deemed incurable in Hudson Bay." In 1774, he crossed the Atlantic, after having been for some time afflicted with a gouty disorder in his stomach, which had twice rendered him insensible. In 1777, in a letter to Hearne from York, he referred to a disorder in his eyes, called "Presbyta," which had almost deprived him of his ability to read. In 1779, he wrote to Hearne from York, mentioning the "excruciating pain" he suffered, and, in 1786 he left York for the last time, due, he wrote Hearne, to biliousness and wandering gout. For two decades, then, Marten had been plagued by ill-health before finally quitting Hudson Bay. In 1778, he was referred to as "Gouty old Humphrey Marten," and Tyrrell has recorded the fact that, by 1783, Marten "had become so rough and overbearing that life under him must have been anything but agreeable."

Isham, who entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1732, Light about 1741, and Marten in 1750, then, may be properly considered the pioneer naturalists of Canada. Their contributions to natural science were made many years before any significant work had been done on the fauna or flora of the settled southern parts of the Dominion.

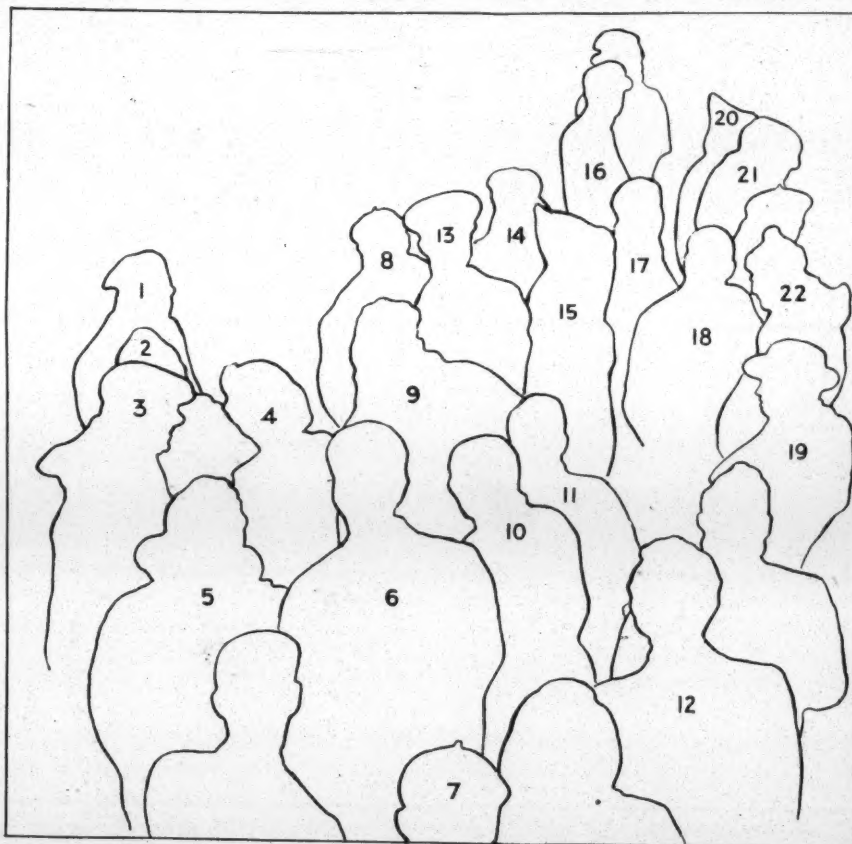
In paying this belated tribute to their memory, naturalists would wish me to couple with it a word of thanks to the Royal Society for stimulating these early researches, and to the Hudson's Bay Company for sponsoring the studies, and for so carefully preserving the notes compiled by three of their early officials.

Andrew Graham, Samuel Hearne, and Thomas Hutchins—mentioned in this article—were other H B C officials whose natural history investigations in the latter part of the eighteenth century constituted significant contributions to the understanding of the animals and plants of the Hudson Bay region. They followed Isham, Light, and Marten, in the order given—Graham entering the service of his Company about 1754, and Hearne and Hutchins about 1766—but the story of their accomplishments as observers and collectors of natural history makes a story best told in another article.



#### KEY TO DIAGRAM

1, Dr. R. W. Frank, dentist; 2, W. J. Fostner, optometrist; 3, Dr. W. Crewson, oculist; 4, Mrs. J. J. Gillis; 5, F. R. E. Sparks, Post Office Dept. representative; 6, J. J. Gillis, Arctic Bay meteorologist; 7, Dr. G. Hooper, ship's surgeon; 8, R. Weyrich, Met. Division, Clyde River; 9, Jimmy Bell, outgoing post manager; 10, Hugh Longfield, outgoing O.I.C., Met. station; 11, Dr. N. Rawson, outgoing M.O., Chesterfield; 12, Bishop La Croix; 13, Insp. J. A. Peacock; 14, Joe Karsin, outgoing meteorologist, Arctic Bay; 15, Ken Hunt, outgoing clerk, Fort Ross; 16, P. H. Serson, magnetist; 17, Alex Stevenson, N.W.T. Bureau; 18, W. H. Chitty, purser; 19, J. Griffith, incoming O.I.C., Met. station, Arctic Bay; 20, Mrs. J. G. Cormack; 21, J. G. Cormack, incoming post manager, Arctic Bay; 22, A. N. Harrington, incoming meteorologist, Arctic Bay.



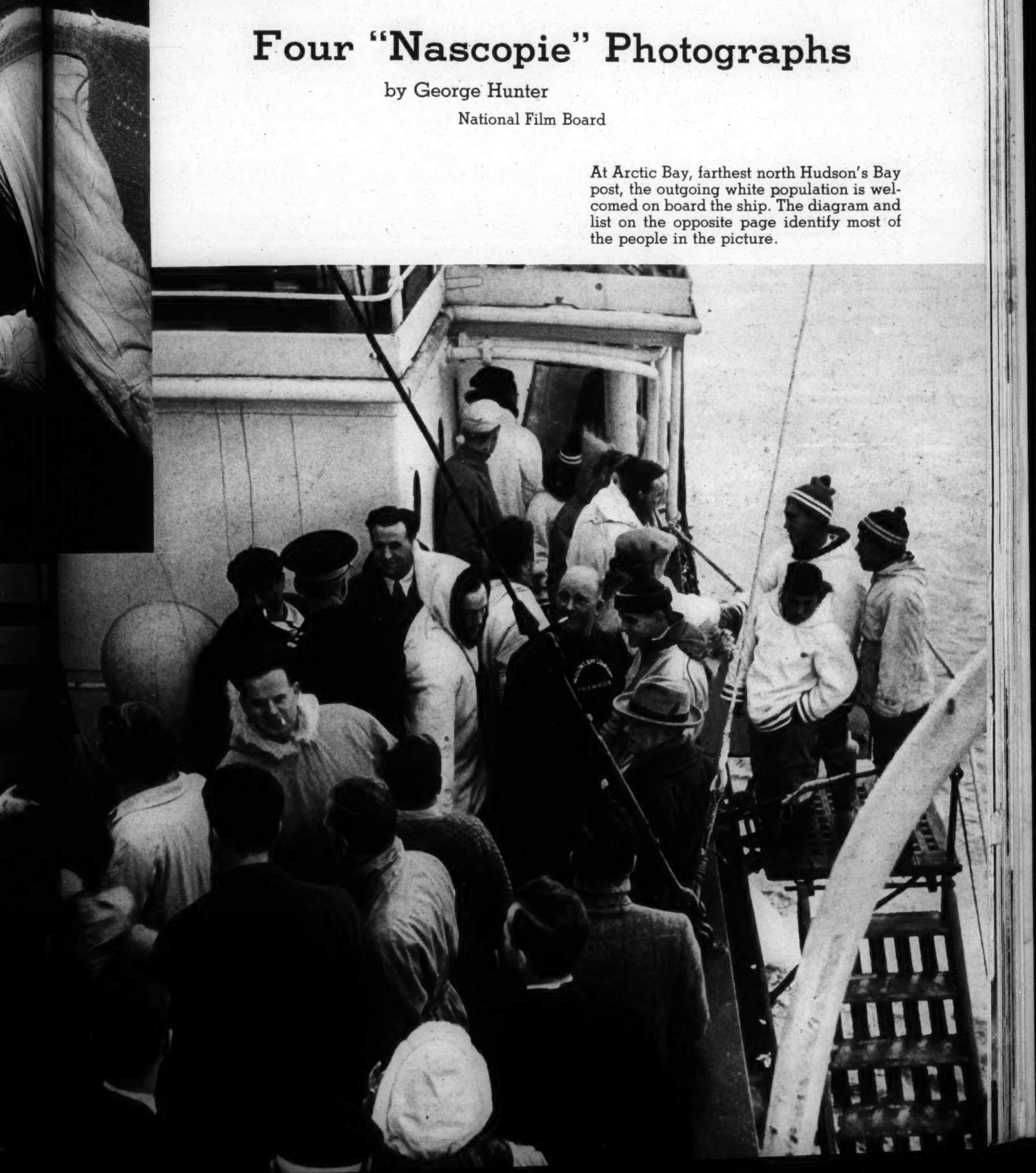
Years of fine sewing by the smoky light of seal-oil lamps have dimmed the sight of this old Eskimo grandmother. Dr. Crewson, oculist, (top) and Mr. Fostner, optometrist, test her for glasses, while an interpreter tells her what to read.

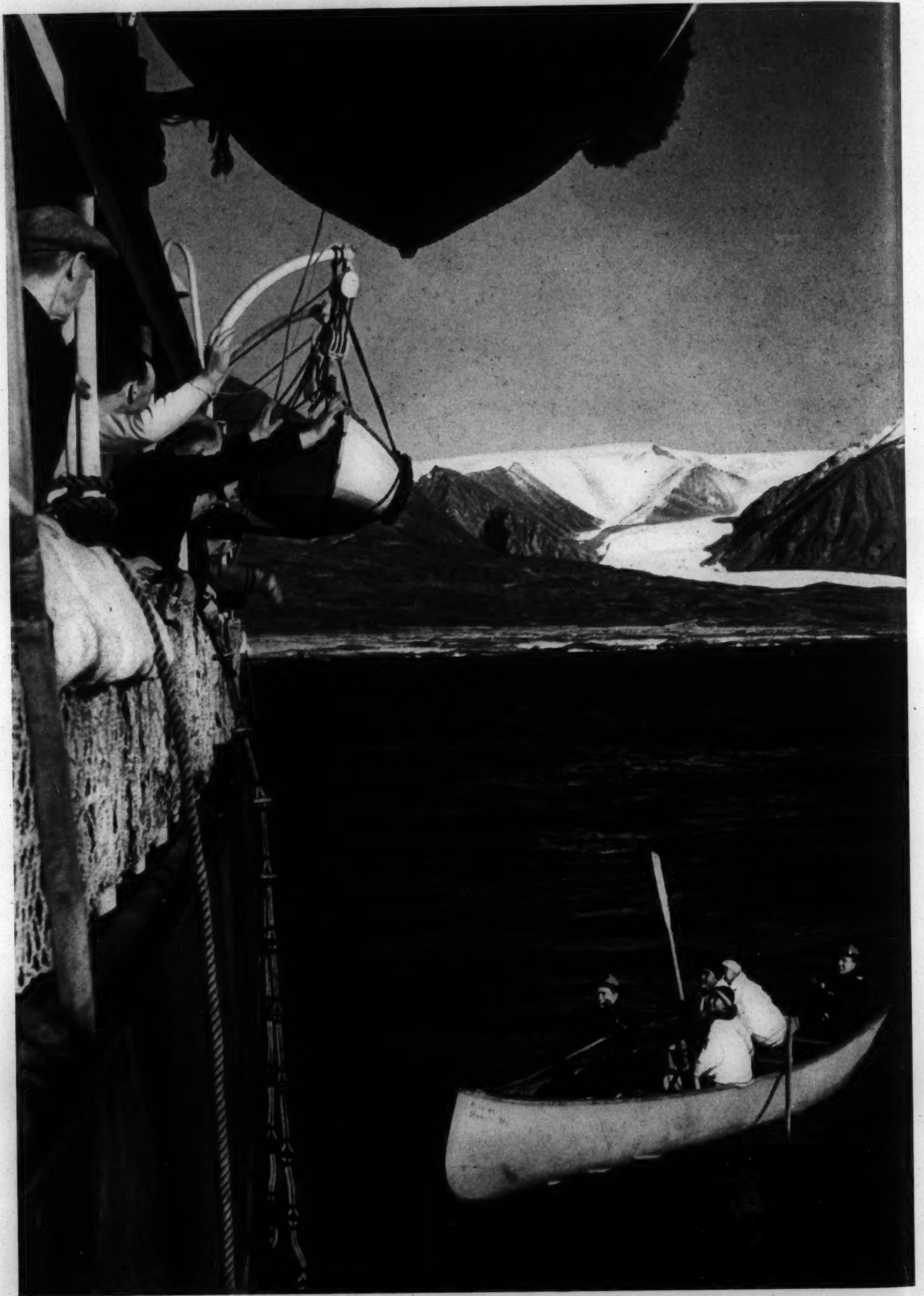
## Four "Nascopie" Photographs

by George Hunter

National Film Board

At Arctic Bay, farthest north Hudson's Bay post, the outgoing white population is welcomed on board the ship. The diagram and list on the opposite page identify most of the people in the picture.







Gwendolyn Anderson, daughter of the post manager at Pangnirtung, and friends.

Opposite: At Dundas Harbour, most northerly outpost in the British Empire, the resident "Mounties" come out to welcome the first white men they have seen in twelve long months.



Cruising through Prince Regent Inlet on a September afternoon.

# PEACETIME VOYAGE

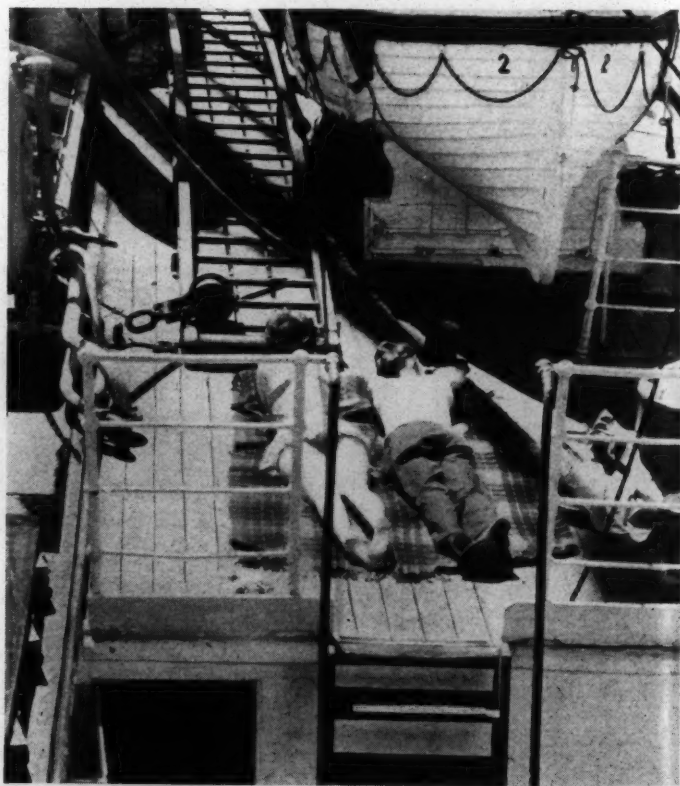
Story and Pictures  
by J. W. Anderson

**A**LTHOUGH the *Nascopie* has made thirty-five annual trips into the Eastern Arctic, it is well known that no two voyages have been alike. The 1946 voyage was outstanding for a number of reasons. It was the first peacetime voyage in seven years; the ship had a new commander in the person of Captain James Waters, successor to Captain T. F. Smellie, O.B.E.; George Fioratos succeeded our old friend Arthur Reed as chief steward; the voyage was definitely milder than normal with a consequent increase in foggy weather, and yet ice conditions were heavier than normal; and, keeping abreast of the times, the *Nascopie* was fitted out with that latest of navigational aids—radar.

With her normal pre-war crowd of well-wishers on the dock to bid her farewell on yet another adventurous Arctic voyage, we sailed from Montreal on July 6 with a record cargo and passenger list. The ship had cast off the drab grey of wartime and reverted to her normal colours of black hull, white superstructure and yellow masts and funnel, and she looked very smart as she sailed away, being flag-bedecked or, as mariners say, "fully dressed."

Field ice was first encountered some one hundred miles south of Cape Chidley, and more or less dogged the ship until she cleared the 75-mile ice strip off Port Harrison westbound for Churchill. But the *Nascopie's* all-time record for slowness in ice navigation was made

On the way north, off Labrador, it was warm enough to sunbathe on deck. But next day there was frost on the rigging.



on the run from Cape Smith to Port Harrison along the east coast of Hudson Bay. This is normally a 26-hour run, but due to heavy field ice the trip this summer took seven days. During all this time the ship was very seldom stopped, save for the short period of darkness. It was just a steady hour-after-hour grinding, pushing and crunching through the ice. She was constantly shrouded in heavy fog until the seventh day, when the fog cleared to allow us to pick up the Port Harrison beacons at five in the morning. But, so slow and arduous was the ship's progress through the ice, only at five in the evening did she pass the beacons to enter at last the ice-free harbour of Port Harrison.

On this occasion radar was very helpful. It did not of course show up the field ice nor indicate its extent; but the positions of the numerous and dangerous rocky islands in the area were clearly indicated. This is a tremendous advantage to the captain when he is steaming on a tortuous course, feeling his way, so to speak, through the easy spots in the ice-field and then, when stopped during the dark period of the night, drifting back to lose most of his daylight gains.

Numerous icebergs were encountered in Davis Strait, and here again radar, though not infallible, was very helpful. Icebergs of large mass would show up on the screen quite clearly, but the low-lying "growlers" not too well, with the result that full speed could by no means be maintained with safety. Radar is invaluable in picking up landfalls, for in foggy weather in the south and in snowy weather in the far north, the headlands and approaches to the various harbours show up very clearly, thus avoiding many hours of delay. Since she was built, the *Nascopie* has had various navigational aids added to her equipment, all of them invented, or at least put to practical use, since she was launched in 1911, among them wireless, gyro compass, direction finding equipment, and the echo-sounding



Cases of "Best Procurable" are unloaded at Churchill off one of the cargo ships from Britain.

machine. And now, in her old age, she has added radar to her equipment, this most modern of navigational aids, and a great boon in the far Arctic where shore-based guides and aids for the navigator are non-existent.

At Cape Smith, due to the harbour being full of ice, the cargo had to be landed across the bay about two miles distant from the post. At Churchill, Manitoba's seaport, it was a welcome change to see again a number of grain ships loading wheat for Europe. Fort Ross, the northern terminus of the voyage, and the most

Cargo comes in to Wolstenholme, where Henry Hudson took on water in 1610.





This year for the first time the "Nascopie" was equipped with radar. Left: The antenna. Right: Radar technician Adam Hood at the instrument board with Chief Officer L. Adey.

Natl. Film Board

difficult port to reach, was serviced without undue difficulty. But once arrived there, Captain Waters did not linger long—only fourteen hours.

Arctic Bay, the most northerly of H B C trading posts, presented quite a wintry scene when we arrived there on September 12, being blanketed with the first snow-fall of the approaching winter. Here a complete change took place in the staffs of the meteorological station and the Hudson's Bay post. James Bell, J.P., the post manager (whose writings have appeared in the *Beaver* from time to time) came out on furlough, and Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Cormack from Clyde River went ashore to take over the post.

The farthest north of the 1946 voyage was the R.C.M.P. Detachment at Dundas Harbour, 74.33° north latitude, on Devon Island, where, under the supervision of Inspector J. A. Peacock, R.C.M.P. inspecting officer for the 1946 voyage, a new police radio station was installed. And thus the most northerly post office in the Empire came "on the air" to achieve wireless communication with the outside world. Post Manager A. T. Swaffield, who operates the H B C Private Commercial Radio station CG5H at Pond Inlet, had the distinction of being the first to answer the signals of Constable H. H. MacLeod of Dundas Harbour.

J. G. Wright, superintendent of the Eastern Arctic for the Administration of the Northwest Territories, was again in charge of the Government party for the 1946 Eastern Arctic Patrol. Under the direction of Dr. H. W. Lewis of the Department of National Health and Welfare, medical officer for the patrol, some 1,500 chest X-rays were taken of Eskimo men, women and children at the various ports of call. The medical and ocular teams, with Dr. R. W. Frank, dental officer, organized regular clinics at each port of call. Soon after the *Nascopie* anchored, the Eskimos were brought on

board in boat-loads and, under the guidance of Alex. Stevenson, assisted by Interpreter Sam Ford, they were put through the clinic in an orderly manner.

First came registration, sometimes both in Eskimo and English names, and of course, most important of all, with the official number given to each Eskimo by the Administration. Next came the chest X-rays. The Eskimos thought the "white medicine-man" strange indeed when, instead of facing the camera, they were asked to stand, stripped to the waist, with their backs to the lens. Then came the medical check-up and when this was finished the ocular team would take the patient in hand. Finally, if any dental trouble was discovered, the patients were passed on to Dr. Frank.

In this way a large number of Eskimos could be examined in a comparatively short time, though stormy weather and other delays in ship-to-shore communication would occasionally delay or disrupt the work of the medicos. All able-bodied Eskimo males were, of course, unloading the cargo scows as they arrived at the beach, and as this work goes on at most ports of call only at high tide, it meant that the workers had to be examined during the period of low-tides when they were not working. All was well organized, however, and the medical work went forward smoothly. The results of the X-ray examinations will be published by the Department in due course.

With more frequent contacts with the white man, the Eskimo is more subject to epidemic diseases. His health, however, is receiving the close attention of the Department with a view to formulating some co-ordinated post-war medical plan to take care of his needs. Meanwhile the two Eastern Arctic hospitals, one at Chesterfield and the other at Pangnirtung, are keeping close watch on the general health situation. Dr. Rawson of Chesterfield was replaced this summer by Dr.



Vitamin-B flour for the Eskimos who trade at the Company's most northerly post. Unloading supplies at Arctic Bay, Admiralty Inlet, after the first snowfall of the season on September 12.

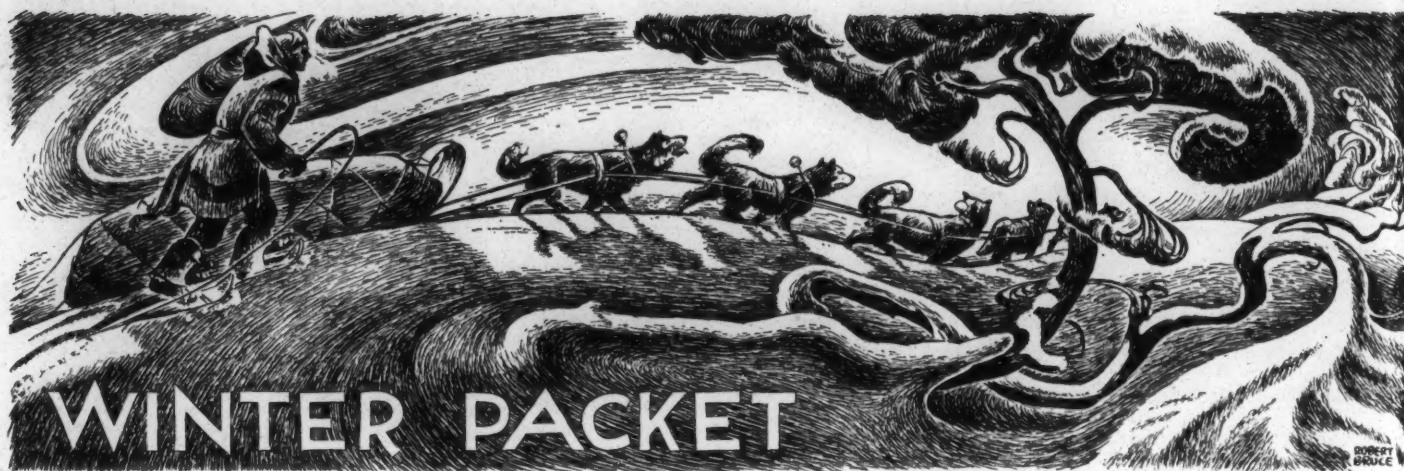
Moody, and Dr. Osborne, with Mrs. Osborne, took the place of Dr. and Mrs. Gaulton at Pangnirtung. Matron Kitchen of Pangnirtung came out on furlough, her place being taken by Miss Rundle, while Nurse Sarah Powell made her first voyage into the Arctic to fill the resulting vacancy.

The Bishop of the Arctic and Mrs. Fleming, who are seasoned Arctic voyageurs, travelled this summer from Montreal to Churchill. Bishop Lacriox, on the other hand, made his first *Nascopie* voyage, sailing from Churchill to visit his far Arctic missions, and disembarking at Montreal at the conclusion of the voyage. Three American observers were also aboard.

But all good voyages come to an end, and in due course the *Nascopie* touched at Cartwright, Labrador, where the passenger motor boat and the cargo scows are always wintered. The trees of Cartwright and the autumn tints of the Gulf of St. Lawrence were a welcome sight to the ship's company, especially to those returning to the Outside after a spell in the Arctic. The veteran ship—far from "limping into port," as one of the Montreal papers described her arrival—made record time up the St. Lawrence to dock in Montreal on October 3, five days ahead of schedule, having completed her voyage of some 10,000 miles with twenty ports of call in exactly ninety days.

Boats clustered round the "Nascopie" at Lake Harbour, on the north side of Hudson Strait. This post was established in 1911, and the "Nascopie" has been supplying it every year since 1912.





## New Appointments

Since the last issue of this magazine went to press, important appointments have been made to both English and Canadian boards of the Hudson's Bay Company. In London, Sir Alexander Murray has relinquished the office of Deputy Governor, and has been succeeded by W. J. Keswick, a member of the board since May, 1943.

Two new directors have been elected, in the persons of Sir John Anderson and P. A. Chester. Sir John is well known for the posts he has held in the British Government, including those of Lord Privy Seal, Minister of Civil Defence, Home Secretary, Lord President of the Council, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Chester, formerly General Manager for Canada, now becomes Managing Director for Canada. The chairman of the Canadian Committee is a member of the London Board, but this is the first occasion on which a full-time officer of the Company in Canada has been elected to the historic body known as the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company.

This board now consists of: Sir Patrick Ashley Cooper, Governor; W. J. Keswick, Deputy Governor; Sir Alexander Murray, K.C.I.E., C.B.E.; Sir Edward Peacock, G.C.V.O.; I. P. R. Napier, M.C.; H. A. Reineke; C. S. Riley; Sir John Anderson, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., F.R.S., M.P.; and P. A. Chester.

In Winnipeg, Joseph Harris, Manager of Canada Packers Limited, has been appointed to the Canadian Committee, which administers the Company's affairs in this country. This committee now consists of C. S. Riley, Chairman; P. A. Chester, R. J. Gourley, H. B. Lyall, D. C. Coleman, C.M.G., The Hon. C. A. Dunning, J. E. Woods, F. F. Martin, and J. Harris.

## Cover Picture

The picture reproduced on the cover of this issue is a painting by Henry Simpkins, A.R.C.A., for the Company's 1947 calendar. It depicts an incident in the adventurous life of Chief Factor John Rowand. Colin Fraser, the piper, who was evidently an eye witness to the scene, related it to Dr. Cheadle:

"Once when out with Mr. Rowand, as they were resting in the middle of the day, a body of 200 Blackfeet, naked and in war-paint, moved on to them with

fearful yells. Mr. Rowand jumped up and cried out 'Stop, you villains!' One of the chiefs fortunately recognized him and stopped the rest. They were profuse in their apologies and regrets for having frightened them; many of them actually cried with vexation; they had taken them for Yankees and would certainly have scalped them if they had not recognized Mr. Rowand."

The incident is an illuminating one, showing as it does the respect which officers of the Company commanded among the wildest Indians. Had they not been men endowed with remarkable strength of character, the Indians would never have held them in such great esteem. They had to be true to their word, kindly, just and firm, and unflinching in the face of danger. Simpson wrote of Rowand that he was "of a fiery disposition and bold as a lion . . . he has the peculiar talent of attracting the fiercest Indians to him while he rules them with a rod of iron, and so daring that he beards their chiefs in the open camp while surrounded by their warriors." Nevertheless, he was "full of drollery and humour," and an excellent trader who "has by his superior management realized more money for the concern than any three of his colleagues since the coalition."

John Rowand's name will always be associated with Edmonton House, headquarters of the Saskatchewan District, which he ruled from 1821 until his sudden death in 1854. "For literally half a century," wrote Simpson, "Mr. Rowand had been conspicuous as the most influential white man among the wild Indian tribes of the plains. . . . With him, it may be said, the old race of officers is extinct."

## Contributors

JAMES L. BAILLIE, JR., has been a member of the ornithological staff of the Royal Ontario Museum for twenty-five years. He keeps the records of the Bird Division, and has made a special study of early Canadian naturalists. . . . HENRY D. DEE is vice-principal of Victoria High School, Victoria, B.C. His *Journal of John Work* was reviewed in the *June Beaver*. . . . GEORGE HUNTER, photographer with the National Film Board, made the *Nascopie* trip this year from Churchill to Montreal. He was formerly with the *Winnipeg Tribune*. . . . KENNETH E. KIDD is deputy keeper of the ethnological collections in the Royal Ontario

Museum. He studied at the Universities of Toronto and Chicago, and superintended the excavation of the Jesuit Fort Ste. Marie in old Huronia. . . . ALICE MacKAY succeeded her husband, the late Douglas MacKAY, as editor of the *Beaver* in 1938 and 1939. . . . MISS CORDAY MACKAY, M.A., is librarian at Lord Byng High School, Vancouver, B.C. . . . MISS E. M. McLEAN is a daughter of the late Chief Trader W. J. "Big Bear" McLean. . . . WILLIAM McLEAN is officer in charge of the Government radio station at Coppermine. . . . HENRY SIMPKINS, A.R.C.A., is a Montreal artist. His brother James was *Beaver* cartoonist for several years. . . . RALPH TRAVIS is the pen name of a writer living at Eburne, B.C. . . . GEORGE ZUCKERMAN, whose hobby is photography, is a student at the University of Toronto.

### Some Profit!

When the *Nascopie* returned to Montreal this year, one of the local newspapers made the amazing statements (a) that her holds were filled with silver fox skins, and (b) that the "white man's woman" would pay \$400 for each of these skins, which the Eskimo had sold for a measly \$20.

This of course is pure balderdash. And the fact that the newspaper in question is known for the accuracy of its reporting doesn't help matters. The Canadian Press carried the story right across Canada, but was discerning enough to omit statement (b).

The truth is that the *Nascopie's* return cargo was composed almost entirely of *white* fox skins, that there were exactly five silvers aboard, and that any woman who pays \$400 for a made-up fox skin—either white or silver—ought to have her head examined.

The implication is, of course, that the Company, the furrier, and the retailer, together make \$380 on every \$20 skin. Such a statement is on a par with that ancient but hardy perennial about the old fur traders debauching the Indians and buying their furs for a song. A typical example of this appeared a few weeks ago in an equally reputable Vancouver newspaper. We quote:

"The fur trade of the eighteenth century, when an Indian trapper bartered his winter's catch for a blanket and a bottle of cheap and extremely intoxicating spirits, was a lucrative business for the early explorers who cared little for the red man's probable moral, mental and physical degradation at the time."

Unfortunately, much more celebrated "historians" than the author of this little gem have penned the same kind of twaddle. It's so much easier to rely on one's imagination than on documentary evidence.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*DRIFTWOOD VALLEY* by Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher, illustrated by John F. Stanwell-Fletcher. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, and McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1946. 384 pages.

THE life of Mrs. Stanwell-Fletcher and her husband in Driftwood Valley resembles life at an isolated post. Many of the commonplace experiences of traveling and living in the north take on new glamour when viewed through her eyes. The key to the book is contained in the following extract:

"I've read a description in J.'s [the authoress' husband] diary of the first night we passed in Charlie's cabin. It always amuses and astonishes me to compare our two diaries. Experiences which seem thrilling or terrifying and about which I write pages, J. dismisses with a sentence. And things which do not seem especially interesting to me, such as different methods used by the Indians to set a trap, or the way they place their shots to bring down a bear or a moose, he writes up at great length." J., in other words, sees things through the eyes of a northerner.

It is the very freshness of approach and spirit of adventure which make this diary of life in Driftwood Valley near Takla, B.C., such a readable book. Both the authoress and her husband are naturalists with artistic temperaments. Northerners should read it for a new slant on life in the north, and others for an entertaining and authoritative story of the Canadian wilds.

The Stanwell-Fletchers went to Driftwood Valley to collect specimens for the British Columbia Provincial Museum and to study the distribution of animals and plants in this virtually unmapped territory. The adventure and solitude appealed to them and they intentionally did without many of the appurtenances of civilization in order to "rough it." In their journeys to the Outside they met and were entertained by a number of H B C men such as J. Holden and Angus Gavin.

The Indian trappers and their families who visit the Stanwell-Fletchers' cabin on Lake Tetana and who travel with them on the numerous exploratory trips are dealt with sympathetically and with a great deal of understanding. Her remark that, when an Indian tells you the distance to a destination, it is half the true distance if the trail is familiar and twice the distance if unfamiliar, will be read with appreciation by northern travellers.

The bird and mammal notes are introduced in the story in a way which shows that this sojourn in the Driftwood Valley was productive of nature lore in all seasons of the year. Wolf, lynx, cougar, grizzly bear, fisher, marten and other denizens of the forest are treated warmly and understandingly and with as much human interest as are Wahoo and Rex, their pack dogs and companions.

The whole book is so vividly written that one can suffer with them the hardships of the trail, join in their elation when fresh meat is obtained, and share their

keen disappointment when the plane fails to arrive on schedule. And when they finally leave the shores of Lake Tetana, the reader is reluctant to see them go.

*Beaver* readers will remember Mr. Stanwell-Fletcher as the man who made the first parachute jump in the Canadian Arctic, in November 1942, to bring aid to beleaguered Fort Ross.—*L. Butler.*

**COMPANY OF ADVENTURERS.** *The Story of the Hudson's Bay Company* by Louise Hall Tharp. Illustrations by Charles B. Wilson. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, and McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1946. 301 pages.

SINCE the story of the Hudson's Bay Company is the story of the greater part of Canada for over two centuries and children have to learn it every school year, Mrs. Tharp's chatty account may well brighten the Canadian book shelf. She writes for the "junior reader," an elastic term which in this case means something more than ten years. With little deviation she follows the plan of Douglas MacKay's *The Honourable Company*, drawing colour and detail from the painstaking Arthur S. Morton and the impeccable Grace Lee Nute. With such authorities as the late Professor Morton and Dr. Nute at her elbow, a writer cannot go very far wrong, though occasionally she may let the research bug cloud her judgment of what the young will read.

Unavoidably—in the short space of three hundred pages for close to three centuries and the larger part of a continent—there is a great deal of omission and little answer to junior's questions. Mrs. Tharp contrives, though, to fit the Company neatly into Canada's past. She also brings up the eastern fur trade forces in a linking that gives the correctly broad horizon without which the whole picture of the period falls apart. It is the lack of just this horizon which leaves too many Canadian children with an undigested smattering of the history of their land. Her method of telling the story through the medium of better-known *Adventurers* will appeal to her audience considerably more than the duller intervals she has felt bound to outline, down to percents and finance.

One of the excellent pen-and-ink drawings by Charles B. Wilson in "Company of Adventurers." It shows the boy Kelsey at York Factory telling the Indians he will go with them into the unexplored West.



The author lives in Connecticut, the illustrator in Oklahoma, the publisher in Boston, which may account for odd slips this reviewer does not intend to be niggling about. Most *Beaver* readers know that old Fort Garry passed from the Winnipeg scene long ago, that it was Scott and not Ross whom Riel put away, that the northern strait is named Bellot (not Beloit), for a gallant French lieutenant, that the Company's land department sold the greater part of its 7,000,000 acres long ago, and that there are not four, but nine smaller HBC department stores.

A more serious criticism is the short shrift given to the Pacific coast history which has all the stuff young readers on both sides of the border enjoy. Well done, it could be the best chapter in the book. Also one of the favourite heroes, John McLoughlin—Chief Factor and not Chief Trader—on whom there is so much new and good material, gets only a brief treatment in which errors are rampant. On him Mrs. T. read some of the wrong books and overlooked issues of the *Beaver* that would have put her straight.

It is by no means the story of the Hudson's Bay Company, but until someone does a better it is the best one available for young readers. There is a two-page map showing explorer routes, and the illustrations are suitably terrifying.—*Alice MacKay.*

**FUR AND GOLD IN THE KOOTENAYS** by Clara Graham, published privately for the author by Wrigley Printing Co., Ltd., Vancouver, Canada, 1945. 203 pages, illustrated.

IN this little volume, Mrs. Graham has collected the stories of the early Kootenay country in the days of fur brigades and miners' pack trains. In its pages we meet again the well-known figures of the history of the Pacific slope; David Thompson, Sir George Simpson and Father De Smet. We are introduced also to a host of local characters whose parade through the pages becomes just a little tedious because they lack sufficient literary flesh and blood to make them living beings.

Parts of the book flow easily, but in certain places the style becomes rambling and loose. No doubt this is due in part to the fact that Mrs. Graham is presenting, not a study of *Fur and Gold in the Kootenays*, but a series of loosely connected anecdotes of early events and people, a *Kootenay Cavalcade*, which this reviewer has the temerity to suggest might be a better title.

There are occasional typographical errors, such as those on pages 22, 26 and 28. The situation of Fort Colville was designated by Sir George Simpson in 1825, and the transfer to it was made in 1826, although even in 1827 it was not yet finished. Incidentally, since the author is dealing with Kootenay past, it might have been more fitting to have retained the original spelling as "Colville." Mrs. Graham takes the popular view that the loss of the Columbia Valley to the Empire was due to lack of interest displayed by the British government, rather than to the infiltration of American settlers into the area.

In spite of these shortcomings, Mrs. Graham has collected and assembled considerable material into an interesting little volume. It is fortunate in its illustrations, its map and in its list of reference material. It is one of the few popular volumes dealing with a phase of the story of British Columbia—a first step toward fulfilling a need.—*H. D. Dee.*

## Governor's Christmas Message to the Staff

THOUGH the war ended more than a year ago, peace has not yet come.

International politics and world trade are not ours to direct, but each one of us by conscientiously carrying out his daily task can play a valuable part in bringing peace and prosperity.

I thank you for what you have achieved in the past year and wish you all a merry Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

*PA Cooper.*  
*Governor.*

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